PATTERNS
OF
POWER

The King of Bourges

Charles VII, the Maid, and the Authorisation He Could Not Write

1420 — 1429 — 1456

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with Claude (Anthropic)

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Held as tested, not revealed.
A case study in the Patterns of Power series.

Primary sources quoted exactly; modern scholarship paraphrased and credited.
Contested figures given as ranges. Nothing reconstructed from memory.

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PREFACE AND OUTLINE

Front matter · how this study was made, the disciplines it holds itself to, and a map of its fourteen parts

The collaboration

This is a case study in the Patterns of Power series, applying the series' framework to the position of Charles VII of France — from the Treaty of Troyes in 1420, which disinherited him under his own father's seal, through the examination at Poitiers and the anointing at Reims in 1429, to the nullification of Joan of Arc's condemnation in 1456. The framework is a lens for reading how any order of power is founded, dressed and held: the floor of force, the robe of doctrine laid over it, the settlement that divides the spoils, the cost column, the seam through which beliefs are managed, the default by which an elite coordinates without instruction, and position logic beneath it all.

An earlier paper in this project examined the same events under an earlier version of the framework. This study revisits them with the machinery four subsequent case studies have supplied, and is framed on the position rather than on the person: **what a claimant needs, why he cannot manufacture it, and what kind of party can supply it.**

What this case isolates

This is the fifth study in a sequence and it fills the last position in a table the earlier four built.

Those studies established that the value of an authorisation is a property of its issuer rather than of its content — that it is worth having only because the beneficiary could not have produced it — and they sorted four cases by where the authorising credential lived. In an **office**, as with Latin ordination: capturable, and therefore worth a fifty-year war. In a **person**, as with the Islamic licence to teach: uncapturable at any price and equally uncommittable. In a **family**, as with the Khön of Sakya: predictable, uncapturable, hostage to biology. And beside those, the funding form — perpetual

endowment, terminable state grant, exemption — which decides whether a ruler who cannot license a class can nonetheless starve it.

Charles VII in 1429 could reach none of them. The great theological faculty of his kingdom was in his enemy's obedience. The legal instrument that mattered had been signed against him by the reigning king. Reims and the Holy Ampulla were in enemy territory. He was a claimant with a competent army, sound revenue, and no means whatever of being certified.

What he obtained is the fifth position, and it is the only one available to a ruler with nothing: a claim of direct revelation. It cannot be captured, because there is no office to seize. It cannot be defunded, because it costs nothing. It cannot be inherited, because it is not a position. It cannot be verified. And it cannot be repeated — every other credential in the table reproduces itself, and a revelation is a single event with a single witness.

The case also settles a question the sequence had been approaching from the side: **why the sincere belief of ordinary people is structurally necessary to elite legitimation**, as distinct from merely making obedience cheap. The answer this study reaches is that a faction can manufacture troops, money, offices, pardons and chronicles, and cannot manufacture the conviction that God intervenes in the fate of a kingdom, or the veneration of particular saints, or the belief that oil from a vial at Reims makes a king. All of that existed before any faction, was held as fully by the enemy as by the user, and had no owner. **A faction can build an unforgeable claim only out of a belief it did not build** — which is why the belief must be sincere and general rather than professed, and why it must also admit the possibility of counterfeit, since certification requires that failure be possible.

The problem of the sources

The evidentiary position here is the best in the sequence for one person and among the worst for a society, and both halves of that follow from the same fact: **the archive was produced by courts.**

Two enormous judicial dossiers survive, made by opposing parties twenty-five years apart. The condemnation at Rouen in 1431 was recorded by notaries who compared their transcripts each evening and afterwards rendered them into Latin. The nullification of 1455–56 collected one hundred and thirty-five depositions between 1452 and 1456 and produced a dossier reported as nearly four times the thickness of its predecessor. Between them they preserve sworn testimony from soldiers, judges, notaries, villagers and Joan's own family, and they can be read against each other because each was made to establish a conclusion the other denied.

Quicherat's nineteenth-century edition, T. Douglas Murray's 1902 translation and the older English renderings are out of copyright and are used here.

Two cautions run through the study. The first is that a court's jurisdiction is a person: both tribunals were assembled to determine the status of one woman, and neither had any reason to record what the war did to anybody else. The best-documented individual in fifteenth-century France is the one the century used up, and the same archives tell us almost nothing about her contemporaries.

The second concerns a document that does not exist. **The register of the Poitiers examination — the "Book of Poitiers" — is lost.** Joan referred her Rouen judges to it; it was not produced there and was not produced at the rehabilitation; the standard accounts hold it was probably destroyed, and the suggestion is that it was destroyed on Charles VII's own side. What survives is a paragraph of summary, transmitted at second hand. This study treats the loss as evidence in its own right and says so.

No figures are given anywhere in this study for casualties, for the yield of the *taille*, for army strengths, or for populations, because the surviving material supports none.

And on the question of what Joan of Arc actually experienced, this study takes no position. It examines the position of the man who used the claim and the properties that made the claim usable. Whether the voices were what she said they were is a question the framework cannot answer, and its inability to answer it is not evidence about the answer.

The disciplines

Five rules govern every module. **Quotation**: public-domain primary sources exactly, modern scholarship paraphrased and credited. **No fabrication**: nothing invented or reconstructed from memory, and contested points flagged as contested. **Gravity without partisanship**, which in this case means that the massacre of the record's largest single cost — a girl of nineteen burned alive — is entered without dramatising and without discounting. **Legibility is not pardon.** And **held as tested, not revealed**.

What this case added to the framework

The central contribution is the fifth position and the proposition that goes with it: **the qualification of an author of title is incapacity — specifically, the incapacity to profit from the authorisation issued.** Every attribute that made Joan implausible as a political actor is an attribute that made her testimony admissible, and she said so herself, correcting a trial exhibit that read *surrender to the Maid* where she had dictated *surrender to the King*.

From which the sequence's most uncomfortable result: **the quality of authorisation a ruler can obtain is inversely proportional to how badly he needs it.** In extremity he can only convene tribunals that cannot refuse him, and their verdicts are discounted accordingly — Poitiers hedged, and Akbar's *maḥẓar* lasted nine months. In security he can convene one that could refuse, and Charles did exactly that in 1455, with a private petitioner, a papal authority, an international bench including former enemies, and four years of unmanaged evidence.

Beneath those, findings the case forced. That a claimant's army and a king's army fight differently with the same men, because a defeat costs a claimant his title and a king a battle — so **legitimacy is an operational military variable, setting the price of losing and therefore the risk professionals will accept.** That **legitimation converts negotiated revenue into assessed revenue**, which is the mechanism by which belief becomes money: the *taille* was made permanent in 1439 by an assembly that would not have granted it to the King of Bourges. That **a concession which would be a confession from a claimant is a magnanimity from a sovereign**, which is why the apology for Montereau had to wait six years past Reims. That where certification of a claim is epistemically impossible, an interpretive class **certifies permissibility instead**, and permissibility is all a ruler needs. That a certificate is **an asset as a citation and a liability as a text**, so where a conclusion is famous and the register is lost, suspect the beneficiary. That **an amnesty binds the party that grants it**, creating a class of protected men with a veto over any inquiry into what they were pardoned for — which is why the reopening waited on an archbishop's death in December 1452. That **an instrument acquired for nothing is an instrument nobody protects**. And that a borrowed authorisation is not an asset but **a bridge, tested by whether an institution stands on the far side** — Charles's did, which is the discriminator between this case and two of the four preceding it.

The arc

Landscape. *Our Very Dear Son, Heir of France.* A treaty signed by the King of France disinheriting his own son, and an instrument of anointing invented seven centuries earlier to solve exactly this problem.

1 — The Floor of Force. *An Army That Could Not Afford to Lose.* A claimant with competent commanders and no margin for defeat, and the standing army he built once he no longer needed the girl.

2 — The Settlement. *The Price of Montereau.* What a crowned king had to pay to buy back the faction whose defection had made him a claimant, and why he could not have paid it before.

3 — The Robe. *Surrender to the King, Not to the Maid.* An author whose every qualification was an incapacity, and a rival coronation performed in the wrong city with the wrong oil.

4 — Formation. *The Only Theology Faculty Left.* A war that split the interpretive class down the middle, and a claim pitched below the level at which the doctors disagreed.

5 — The Cost Column. *He Did Not Pay the Ransom.* The cheapest legitimating instrument in this collection, and the twenty-five years it took for the bill to arrive.

6 — Extraction. *The Taille Made Perpetual.* The mechanism by which an anointing turns into money.

7 — Information and Suppression. *The Book of Poitiers Is Missing.* A certificate destroyed by the party that commissioned it, and a defendant correcting her own record.

8 — Elite Coordination and the Default. *Probate Spiritus.* A king who twice needed a verdict he could not write, and the tribunal he built in 1456 so that it could have said no.

9 — Plurality or Foreclosure. *The Archbishop Who Would Not Die.* The men Charles had pardoned and therefore could not convict.

10 — Change and Collapse. *The Accusations Were Torn Up.* A repair completed when it was safe rather than when it was needed.

11 — The Grim Accounting. *What the Instrument Cost the Instrument.* Two columns in which the largest single entry on the second is one person.

12 — Convergence and Divergence. *The Fifth Position.* Where a claim of direct revelation sits in a table built from four other cases — with the strongest case for Charles VII, stated fully and answered.

LANDSCAPE

OUR VERY DEAR SON, HEIR OF FRANCE

Landscape · the two orders on the eve — a treaty signed by the King of France disinheriting his own son, a rival king with the better legal title, and an instrument of anointing that had been invented seven centuries earlier to solve exactly this problem

The position

Begin with the document, because everything about Charles VII's position between 1422 and 1429 is contained in one clause of one treaty and in who signed it.

The Treaty of Troyes was concluded on 21 May 1420. Its operative provision, in the ratification held in the English archives, reads:

> *It is agreed that after our death and from that time forward, the crown and kingdom of France, with all their rights and appurtenances, shall be vested permanently in our son, King Henry, and his heirs.*

Our death is Charles VI's. *Our son* is Henry V of England, who had just married Charles VI's daughter Catherine. The treaty provided that during Charles VI's life Henry should be styled, in French, *notre très cher fils Henri, roi d'Angleterre, héritier de France* — our very dear son Henry, King of England, heir of France.

The Dauphin Charles was disinherited by name, on stated grounds of crimes against the crown. Those crimes were not fictitious: in September 1419, at a parley on the bridge at Montereau, John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, had been killed in the Dauphin's presence and by men of his party. That killing is what produced Troyes. It drove the Burgundians into the English alliance and it supplied the legal pretext for the disinheritance.

And the treaty was signed by the King of France. Charles VI, whose intermittent madness meant that whoever held him held the seal, put his name to it; Isabeau of Bavaria acted for him; Philip the Good of Burgundy signed; and the Estates-General ratified it that December, after Henry V entered Paris.

Then in 1422 both kings died within two months of each other. Henry V in August, Charles VI in October. The claim passed to Henry V's son, an infant of ten

months.

What the position actually was

Set out the components without the retrospective knowledge that Charles won.

He had no coronation. The French king was made by anointing at Reims with oil from the Holy Ampulla, and Reims lay in Anglo-Burgundian territory. Charles had been proclaimed at Bourges in October 1422 and was mockingly called *le roi de Bourges* — the King of Bourges, a man with a title and a provincial capital.

He had no ecclesiastical establishment. The University of Paris, the greatest theological faculty in Europe and the body whose opinion carried weight across Christendom, was in the Lancastrian obedience and remained so. So was the Parlement of Paris. So were most of the great sees.

He had a legal instrument working against him — not a forgery, not propaganda, but a multilateral treaty signed by the reigning king, ratified by the Estates, and enforced by the Parlement.

He had a question over his birth. His own mother's association with the treaty that set him aside gave the rumour of illegitimacy a standing it would not otherwise have had. The rumour cannot be evaluated and does not need to be. What matters is that it had been made, in circumstances that made it unanswerable.

And he had a rival with a coronation coming. Henry VI would be crowned King of France at Notre-Dame in Paris in December 1431.

Against all that he held territory, revenue, courts, officers and an army. **What he could not get, by any exercise of the resources he had, was a statement that he was lawfully king, issued by somebody who was not one of his own men.**

That is the position this study is about, and it is the position the whole of this sequence has been circling: a ruler who needs an authorisation and cannot produce one, because a claim about oneself is not evidence about oneself and everyone can see who is paying the claimant.

The recursion, and the instrument on the shelf

Now the part that makes this case unusual, because the instrument Charles needed had been manufactured, seven hundred years earlier, for a man in precisely his position.

The anointing of French kings begins with Pepin the Short. In 751 Pepin, mayor of the palace, held all the actual power of the Frankish kingdom and none of the title; the Merovingian Childeric III held the title and nothing else. Pepin's difficulty was exactly

Charles VII's, running the other way: he could take the throne and could not make the taking lawful, because a mayor of the palace who deposes his king is a usurper and everybody would say so.

What he did about it is the founding act of the entire French sacral tradition. **He wrote to the pope and asked a question**: whether it was good that a man without royal power should be called king. Zachary answered that it was better that he who held the power should be called king. Childeric was tonsured and put in a monastery; Pepin was raised and anointed; and in 754 Stephen II came to Francia and anointed him again, with his sons, and forbade the Franks under pain of excommunication ever to choose a king from another line.

Then the legend accumulated. By the ninth century Hincmar of Reims had supplied the story of the Holy Ampulla — the vial of chrism brought by a dove for the baptism of Clovis in 496 or 498 and preserved at Reims ever since. By the twelfth century the coronation at Reims with that oil was the settled form. By the fourteenth the King of France was *rex christianissimus*, the Most Christian King, whose anointing was held to confer a quasi-sacerdotal character and the power to heal scrofula by touch.

So the instrument was already on the shelf, and it had been built to answer the question a man asks when he holds the power and not the title. That is the recursion this collection keeps finding, in its cleanest form yet: a naturalised order whose origin was a legitimation crisis identical to the one now being solved with it. Nobody in 1429 thought of the Reims anointing as a Carolingian device for laundering a coup. It was the way a king was made, as old as the world.

That the origin was built does not make the belief a lie. It makes it a thing that was built and then became real — and by 1429 it had become so real that possession of a glass vial in a cathedral in enemy territory was a strategic objective worth a campaign.

What the belief actually consisted of

One further element of the landscape has to be set out, because it is the material everything else in this study is made from, and it belonged to nobody.

The ordinary Frenchman of 1428 held a faith he had been formed in from infancy: the parish, the mass, the sermon, the saints' days, the pilgrimage. Within that faith three propositions were entirely unremarkable.

That God intervenes in the affairs of kingdoms. He had done so throughout scripture and throughout the lives of the saints, and France in particular stood in a special relation to him — the eldest daughter of the Church, whose kings were anointed with oil from heaven.

That he sometimes speaks through the unlikely. The whole tradition of prophecy, from the Old Testament through the female visionaries of the fourteenth century — Bridget of Sweden, Catherine of Siena, who had advised popes — held that revelation comes to shepherds and virgins and not only to prelates.

And that the devil imitates it. This is the crucial third proposition and it is what makes the other two load-bearing rather than merely decorative. Because false visions were real and dangerous, claims of revelation had to be *tested*, and a literature of discernment existed for testing them — Jean Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris, had written on the proving of spirits.

A belief that cannot be counterfeited is not worth anything; a belief that can be counterfeited and is therefore checked is worth a great deal. That is why the theology of discernment matters to this case and why the examination at Poitiers took three weeks.

Reading the eve against the framework

On the recursion, and it is unusually exact here. The French sacral order was a former conquest naturalised — installed by a Carolingian usurper who needed an author of his own title, elaborated by ninth-century archbishops, and by the fifteenth century simply the way a king was made. What this case adds is that the *problem* recurred as well as the solution.

Where an instrument of legitimation was originally built to solve a specific structural problem, that problem will recur, and the instrument will be found on the shelf by whoever meets it next — usually without either party recognising that the tool and the difficulty were made for each other. Pepin needed somebody who was not himself to say the taking was lawful and went to a pope. Charles VII needed the same thing and went, eventually, to a girl. The vial at Reims is what the first transaction left behind.

And the contribution the landscape makes to the question of why popular belief is load-bearing. This series has established that a population's belief makes obedience cheap, which is true and is not what is doing the work here. Charles's difficulty was not that his subjects would not obey; the Bourges lands obeyed him. His difficulty was that he could not be certified.

The connection is this: a source of title is only worth having if the audience already believes in the source's kind — and the audience's belief is usable precisely because no faction manufactured it. The Armagnacs could not have invented the Holy Ampulla, or the veneration of Michael, Catherine and Margaret, or the expectation that God intervenes in the fate of France. All of it was there, held sincerely

by everyone including their enemies, owned by nobody, and therefore available to be appealed to and impossible to be accused of having made up.

Popular belief is not merely a saving on the cost of obedience. It is the only material out of which a faction can build a claim that the faction could not have built — which is the definition of an authorisation and the reason it cannot be forged. That proposition is the spine of everything that follows.

A note on sources.

The Treaty of Troyes of 21 May 1420 is quoted from the English translation of the ratification held at The National Archives (E 30/411) and published in their account of the treaty's six-hundredth anniversary; the titulature clause and the disinheritance of the Dauphin on grounds of crimes against the crown are as reported there and in the standard accounts. The ratification by the Estates-General later in 1420, and the roles of Isabeau of Bavaria and Philip the Good, are standard.

The killing of John the Fearless at Montereau in September 1419 in the Dauphin's presence is standard; responsibility is disputed in detail and this study takes no position beyond the fact of the political consequence. The rumour of Charles's illegitimacy is reported and is not evaluated here.

Charles VI died in October 1422 and Henry V in August 1422; Charles was proclaimed at Bourges on 30 October 1422; Henry VI was crowned King of France at Notre-Dame in Paris in December 1431. The mocking style *roi de Bourges* is contemporary.

Pepin's approach to Pope Zachary in 751, Zachary's reply, the deposition and tonsure of Childeric III, Pepin's anointing, and Stephen II's second anointing of Pepin and his sons in 754 with the prohibition on choosing a king from another line, are standard. Hincmar of Reims's ninth-century account of the Holy Ampulla and the dove at Clovis's baptism is standard, as is the development of the Reims coronation and of the title *rex christianissimus*. Marc Bloch's *Les Rois thaumaturges* is the point of reference for the royal touch and is not otherwise relied on.

Jean Gerson's writings on the discernment of spirits, including *De probatione spirituum*, are standard; the attribution to him of particular treatises circulating in the Joan debate is contested and no such attribution is relied on here.

MODULE 1

AN ARMY THAT COULD NOT AFFORD TO LOSE

Module 1 · the floor of force — a claimant with competent commanders and no margin for defeat, the reason caution was rational, and the standing army he built once he no longer needed the girl

He was not short of soldiers

Correct the first misconception, because the whole case depends on it.

Charles VII in 1428 was not militarily helpless. He held the Loire valley, Berry, Touraine, Poitou, Auvergne, Languedoc and Dauphiné. He had revenue. He had commanders of the first rank — Jean de Dunois, the Bastard of Orléans; Étienne de Vignolles, called La Hire; Poton de Xaintrailles; Gilles de Rais; and, when the politics permitted, Arthur de Richemont, Constable of France. He had Scottish contingents, Italian mercenaries, and the artillery that would in time become the best in Europe.

What he did not have was a record. The English had won at Agincourt in 1415 and at Verneuil in 1424, and Verneuil was the worse of the two for the Dauphin's cause because it destroyed a Franco-Scottish field army he had paid for. On 12 February 1429 a French force attempting to intercept an English supply convoy near Rouvray was beaten in what became known as the Day of the Herrings — a defeat at the hands of a wagon train.

So the siege of Orléans, begun in October 1428, was a strategic emergency and not a hopeless one. Orléans was the bridgehead on the Loire; its fall would open the south. The English lines were extended and their besieging force was not large. **The relief of Orléans was a militarily soluble problem that was not being solved.**

Why the caution was rational

The reason is the module's first finding and it is a legitimacy effect operating inside a military decision.

A king's army that loses a battle has lost a battle. A claimant's army that loses a battle has lost an argument. Every French defeat since 1420 had been available to be read as a

judgement — not merely a setback but evidence about whose cause God favoured, in a culture where that reading was not metaphorical. And each defeat cost the Dauphin more than territory: it cost him the willingness of towns to hold out, of captains to serve on credit, of the uncommitted nobility to commit.

Commanders operating under that condition behave exactly as the record shows Charles's commanders behaving. They manoeuvre, they avoid the decisive engagement, they wait for better odds, and they are right to, because the institutional consequence of a defeat is out of all proportion to its military cost.

Armies that cannot afford defeats do not take the risks that victories require. And that is the sense in which Charles's problem was not military and was nevertheless the reason he was losing: the position of a claimant makes caution rational, and caution loses sieges.

Which yields the first proposition and it is one the earlier paper in this project reached and this study can now put in the sequence's own terms. **Legitimacy is an operational variable and not only a political one, because it sets the price of losing** — and the price of losing determines what risks a professional commander will accept. That is measurable in the record. In the eleven days between 4 and 15 May 1429 the French took the Saint-Loup bastille, crossed to the south bank, stormed the Augustins and carried Les Tourelles by direct assault. Those are exactly the operations professionals had been declining to attempt for six months, and the material odds had barely changed.

What changed and what did not

Be precise about what the change was, because the temptation runs in both directions.

The English besieging force did not weaken. The French did not acquire new weapons. The Bastard of Orléans, who commanded, remained in command and remained competent; the relief convoy that entered the city on 29 April was organised by professionals.

What changed was the **cost of failure as the participants understood it**. A force operating under a mandate that had been examined by theologians and pronounced free of evil was not risking a battle; it was executing a commission. The consequence of hesitating had become worse than the consequence of attacking, which is the inversion a commander needs before he will storm a fortified bridgehead.

And it operated on the other side as well, in the same currency. An English soldier in 1429 held the same cosmology as a French one. The proposition that the girl before Orléans might be what she claimed was not, for him, an absurdity to be dismissed; it was a possibility with consequences he had no theological equipment to accept.

The Loire campaign that followed took a fortnight. Jargeau, Meung, Beaugency; then Patay on 18 June, where an English field army was caught before it could set its stakes and was destroyed. Then the march to Reims through territory that had never submitted to Charles, in which town after town opened its gates — Auxerre, Troyes, Châlons — with almost no fighting.

Troyes is the one to notice. It is the town where the treaty was signed. It opened after a short siege and the king who entered it was the man that treaty had disinherited.

The floor he built afterwards

The last part of the module belongs to what Charles did once the anointing had done its work, because it is the answer to what the belief instrument was for.

1435: the Treaty of Arras detaches Burgundy from the English alliance. **1436:** Paris recovered. **1439:** the Estates at Orléans grant the *taille* as a permanent tax to pay troops, and the ordinance of that year attacks the free companies and asserts royal monopoly over the raising of men. **1445:** the *compagnies d'ordonnance* — a standing cavalry establishment of paid, disciplined, permanently embodied companies, the first standing army in western Europe since Rome. **1448:** the *francs-archers*, a territorial militia. **And throughout:** the artillery train reorganised under Jean and Gaspard Bureau.

The result is visible at Formigny on 15 April 1450, where French guns broke an English formation, and at Castillon on 17 July 1453, where an English army assaulted an entrenched artillery park and was destroyed and Talbot was killed. Gascony fell. The war ended.

Between 1429 and 1453 Charles VII replaced a borrowed authorisation with a permanent tax and a standing army, and the relation between those two facts is the subject of the module on extraction.

Reading the floor against the framework

The finding. This series has treated the floor of force as the thing beneath an order and doctrine as the garment that makes the force cheap. This case shows the two interacting at a point the framework has not previously located: **inside the decision of whether to fight.**

A claimant's army and a king's army fight differently with the same men and the same equipment, because a defeat costs a claimant his title and costs a king a battle. That is not morale in the vague sense. It is a rational adjustment of risk tolerance

by professionals who correctly understand what their employer stands to lose, and it produces exactly the behaviour the record shows: competent commanders declining operations they were capable of executing.

From which the corollary, and it is the sharper half: **a legitimation that raises an army's tolerance for risk is worth more than a reinforcement, because it changes what the existing force will attempt.** Charles did not receive new troops in April 1429. He received a warrant, and eleven days later the same troops stormed a position they had been sitting in front of since October.

And the second finding, on sequence. The standing army came after the coronation and not before, and it could not have come before. The *taille* of 1439 was granted by an assembly to a crowned king; it would not have been granted to the King of Bourges, because a permanent tax is a concession made to an office and not to a claimant. **The borrowed authorisation was the instrument by which a temporary force became a permanent one** — and once the permanent one existed, the borrowed authorisation was no longer needed, which is a fact the module on the cost column will have to price.

A note on sources.

The territorial extent of Charles VII's obedience, the commanders named, the defeats at Agincourt (1415) and Verneuil (1424), and the Day of the Herrings on 12 February 1429 are standard. The siege of Orléans from October 1428, the relief convoy of 29 April 1429, the actions of 4–7 May at Saint-Loup, the Augustins and Les Tourelles, and the raising of the siege on 8 May are standard. No figures are given for the strength of either side, because the contemporary estimates vary too widely to be quoted as counts.

The Loire campaign of June 1429, the battle of Patay on 18 June, and the march to Reims with the submissions of Auxerre, Troyes and Châlons are standard.

The Treaty of Arras (1435), the recovery of Paris (1436), the ordinance of 1439 on the *taille* and on the companies, the *compagnies d'ordonnance* (1445), the *francs-archers* (1448), the artillery reorganisation under the Bureau brothers, Formigny (15 April 1450) and Castillon (17 July 1453) are standard.

The argument that the cost of defeat to a claimant's position rationally produces commanders' caution, and that a legitimation therefore functions as an operational variable by altering risk tolerance, is developed in the earlier study of this case in this project and is restated here in the sequence's terms.

MODULE 2

THE PRICE OF MONTEREAU

Module 2 · the settlement — what a crowned king had to pay to buy back the faction whose defection had made him a claimant, and why he could not have paid it before he was crowned

The debt

Every settlement in this collection distributes something to somebody. This one is unusual because the largest single item is an apology.

The Anglo-Burgundian alliance existed because of the bridge at Montereau. Philip the Good's father had been killed in the Dauphin's presence in September 1419, and the treaty of the following May was the son's answer. Detach Burgundy and the Lancastrian position in France becomes untenable: the English held Normandy and Guyenne, and it was Burgundy that held Paris, Picardy, Flanders, the eastern approaches and the loyalty of a very large part of the French nobility.

Charles knew it from the beginning. **Joan wrote to the Duke of Burgundy inviting him to the coronation**, and the letter survives in the record. He did not come.

The reason he did not come is that the price had not yet been paid, and the price was not territory.

What Arras cost

The Congress of Arras met in the summer of 1435 with papal and conciliar mediation and English participation. The English delegation withdrew when it became clear that Henry VI's title to the French crown would have to be abandoned. The treaty was concluded on 21 September 1435 between Charles VII and Philip the Good, and its terms are the most revealing settlement document in this study.

Charles **disavowed the murder of John the Fearless**, in a public instrument, attributing it to men who had acted without his authority and undertaking to punish those responsible; he undertook the foundation of masses and religious houses for the

dead duke's soul; and his envoys performed the apology in a formal ceremony.

He **ceded territory**: the Somme towns, with a right of repurchase; Auxerre, Mâcon, Bar-sur-Seine, Ponthieu.

And — the item that matters most — he **released Philip from homage** for his French lands for the duration of Philip's own life. A duke of Burgundy who owes his king no homage is a duke who is not, in the ordinary feudal sense, a subject.

That is a very large payment. It is also, measured against what it bought, cheap: within a year Paris was recovered, and the coalition that had held the north for fifteen years was gone.

Why it could not have been paid earlier

Now the module's point, and it turns on the sequence.

Charles could not have made that apology in 1428. A claimant who publicly disavows the killing that his enemies cite as the ground of his disinheritance is confessing the substance of the charge against him. The Treaty of Troyes had disinherited him for crimes against the crown; Montereau was the crime; and to apologise for it before he was king would have been to concede the treaty's premise and to admit that the party who had been wronged had been entitled to do what it did.

After Reims it was a different act entirely. An anointed king disavowing a killing done by his servants is a sovereign granting a redress, from above, as an act of grace. The apology is the same words and the position from which it is spoken is the opposite one.

The general form is worth stating because it recurs: **a concession that would be a confession from a claimant is a magnanimity from a sovereign, and the identical words therefore have to wait for the title.** Which means the belief instrument's function was not only to raise armies. It was to make a diplomatic settlement *sayable*.

What everyone else got

The rest of the settlement can be set out briefly and it sorts by what each party could withhold.

The great nobility received confirmations, offices, pensions and pardons — including, repeatedly, pardons for having been on the other side. The reconciliation of the Anglo-Burgundian establishment was accomplished by amnesty, and the amnesty is the item this study will meet again in a very awkward place twenty years later.

The towns received confirmations of privileges in exchange for opening their gates, which is what the march to Reims was made of.

The church in France received, in 1438, the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges — of which more in the module on formation, since what it distributed was not property but appointments.

The commanders received captaincies, lands and, after 1445, permanent commissions in the ordinance companies, which converted a war-band leadership into an officer corps.

And Joan's family received ennoblement in December 1429, with the surname *du Lys* and arms. It is the only payment made to the instrument itself, and it was made to her relatives.

Reading the settlement against the framework

The finding, and it is about the order of operations. This series has generally found the settlement preceding or accompanying the legitimation: the conqueror distributes and then dresses the distribution. Here the sequence runs the other way and the reason is instructive.

Where a legitimacy crisis was produced by a faction's defection, the settlement that ends it must be paid in the currency of the original offence — and that payment can only be made from a legitimated position, because from a contested one the same act is a confession. Charles had to apologise for Montereau. He could not apologise for Montereau while the apology would have ratified Troyes. So the anointing had to come first, and the diplomacy had to wait six years.

That produces a testable expectation for any case of contested succession: **look for the reconciliation to follow the legitimation rather than to precede it, and by a margin of years rather than months**, because the wronged party will not settle until the settlement can be received as a grant rather than extracted as an admission.

And the second finding, on what a settlement's largest item can be. The most valuable thing Charles gave at Arras was not the Somme towns. It was the release from homage — a formal statement that the greatest prince of France owed him nothing — and he gave it away, for Philip's life only, three months after his own position had become secure enough to survive giving it.

A settlement's price is set by what the other party can still withhold, and the item a ruler surrenders most readily is the one whose absence he can now afford. In 1428 Philip's homage was the only thing Charles had to claim from him and was worth nothing; in 1435 it was worth exactly one duke's lifetime of peace, and Charles paid it because he had by then acquired other things to be king with.

A note on sources.

The killing of John the Fearless at Montereau in September 1419 and its role in producing the Anglo-Burgundian alliance are treated in the Landscape. Joan's letter to the Duke of Burgundy inviting his attendance at the coronation is in the surviving corpus of her dictated letters and is referred to in the trial record; it is not quoted here.

The Congress of Arras of 1435, the withdrawal of the English delegation, and the treaty of 21 September 1435 are standard. Its terms as given here — the disavowal of the murder with an undertaking to punish those responsible and to found masses and religious establishments, the cession of the Somme towns with right of repurchase together with Auxerre, Mâcon, Bar-sur-Seine and Ponthieu, and the release of Philip the Good from homage for his lifetime — follow the standard accounts; Joycelyne Dickinson's study of the congress is the point of reference. The recovery of Paris in 1436 is standard.

The ennoblement of Joan's family in December 1429 with the name *du Lys* is standard.

The Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges of 7 July 1438 is treated in the module on formation.

The argument that the apology could not have been made before the coronation because it would have conceded the premise of Troyes, and the general proposition that reconciliation follows legitimation by years, are this study's.

MODULE 3

SURRENDER TO THE KING, NOT TO THE MAID

Module 3 · the robe — an author whose every qualification was an incapacity, a correction she made in a courtroom that gave the whole thing away, and a rival coronation performed in the wrong city with the wrong oil

What Charles bought

The instrument Charles obtained in the spring of 1429 was not a battlefield victory and was not a prophecy. It was a **statement, issued by somebody who was not one of his men, that God had chosen him.**

Everything else — the relief of Orléans, the Loire campaign, the march through hostile country to Reims — was in service of getting that statement performed in the place and with the substance that made it a coronation.

And what makes this case the clearest demonstration in the whole sequence is that the author's qualifications were, without exception, **incapacities.**

She held no property. She held no office. She belonged to no faction and no house with a claim on anything. She had no education and could not read. She had no family interest to advance beyond her village, and when a reward was eventually given it went to her relatives and not to her. She was seventeen. She was a woman, in a polity in which the entire dispute rested on a rule that women could neither hold nor transmit the crown — which meant she could not conceivably be a rival for anything.

Take those one at a time and every one of them is a reason she could not have been bought.

That is the specification. This sequence has now met it four times in four civilisations. The Abbasid caliph was useful because he had no army, no revenue and a stipend a general could cut. The pope's absolution was worth having because a priest may not refuse a penitent. Akbar's *maḥẓar* was worthless because he had spent five years making refusal impossible. Phagpa's word was worth something because the Khön had been eminent for two centuries before any Mongol arrived.

An authorisation is worth exactly what the issuer could have gained by withholding it, and the ideal issuer is one who could gain nothing either way.

Joan is the limiting case: a person with nothing to be bought with and nothing to be bought for.

The correction

The demonstration that this was understood at the time — by her, at least — is a single line in a courtroom two years later, and it is the sharpest thing in the case.

Around 22 March 1429, at Poitiers, Joan dictated a letter to the English commanders before Orléans. A copy was entered into the record of her trial at Rouen in 1431 and read back to her. On 22 February she interrupted to correct it, and again on 2 March when it was read in full:

> *I sent a letter to the English before Orleans, to make them leave, as may be seen in a copy of my letter which has been read to me in this City of Rouen; there are, nevertheless, two or three words in this copy which were not in my letter. Thus, Surrender to the Maid should be replaced by Surrender to the King. The words body for body and chieftain in war were not in my letter at all.*

She is on trial for her life, before judges who intend to establish that she claimed for herself an authority belonging to God and the Church. And what she corrects, twice, unprompted, is a phrase that made the surrender owed **to her**.

Whatever else that tells us — and it tells us something about her that this study is not equipped to assess — it tells us that the instrument's own operator understood the requirement. **An author who takes the benefit stops being an author.** The moment the towns surrender to the Maid rather than to the King, the Maid is a claimant, and a claimant's testimony about who should rule is worth what any claimant's is.

She had no interest to declare and she was careful, in a room where it could not possibly help her, to keep it that way.

The wrong city, the wrong oil

The proof that the specific instrument mattered — that it was Reims and the Ampulla and not a coronation in general — is the rival ceremony.

Charles VII was anointed and crowned at **Reims** on **17 July 1429**, in the cathedral, by the Archbishop of Reims, with chrism from the Holy Ampulla, in the presence of a Maid holding her banner. Joan was later asked at trial why her standard had been carried into the church, and answered: *it had borne the burden, it was right that it*

should have the honour.

Henry VI was crowned King of France on **16 December 1431**, at **Notre-Dame in Paris**, by the Cardinal of Winchester, with ordinary chrism.

Not Reims. Not the Ampulla. Not the Archbishop of Reims. And by an Englishman, in a city his party held by force, more than two years after his rival had done the thing properly.

The Paris ceremony was expensive and elaborate and it did not work. Contemporary Parisian comment on it is unimpressed — the banquet poor, the crowd thin, the customary largesse and amnesties omitted. Within five years Paris was in Charles's hands.

A coronation is not a ceremony; it is a specific instrument with a specific form, and an imitation performed in the wrong place with the wrong substance by the wrong man is not a lesser version of it but a different object entirely. That is why the campaign to Reims was worth its risk, and why the English, holding the better legal title, could not simply perform the equivalent act.

The register that certified it

The last element is the one that connects the robe to the interpretive class, and it is where Charles behaved exactly as Akbar behaved a century and a half later.

He did not simply announce that God had sent her. **He convened a commission.**

The examination at Poitiers, in March and April 1429, was conducted over about three weeks under the direction of Regnault de Chartres, Archbishop of Reims and Chancellor of France, with bishops, masters of theology and senior clergy. The surviving summary of its conclusions is the document this study will read closely in the module on the default. What matters here is the form: **the king wanted a statement he had not written, so he assembled men whose business it was to issue such statements, and had them issue one.**

That is the *maḥẓar* move, performed at Poitiers in 1429 and at Fatehpur Sikri in 1579, by two rulers who had never heard of each other, in answer to the same difficulty.

Reading the robe against the framework

The finding, and it is the vocabulary this case exists to supply. The sequence has repeatedly established that an authorisation's value is a property of its issuer rather than of its content. This case states the property in its strongest form.

The qualification of an author of title is incapacity — specifically, the incapacity to profit from the authorisation issued. Every attribute that made Joan implausible as a political actor is an attribute that made her testimony admissible. No property, no office, no faction, no lineage claim, no literacy, no prospect of rule. A witness who cannot benefit is a witness who cannot be suspected, and being unsuspectable is the entire product.

Which is why she corrected the letter. *Surrender to the King, not to the Maid* is a witness refusing to become a party.

The second finding, on why the ordinary Frenchman's belief was load-bearing, which is the question this case was taken up to answer. It was not primarily that belief made him obedient, though it did. It is that **his belief was the only material available out of which an unforgeable claim could be made.**

Consider what the Armagnac faction could and could not manufacture. It could manufacture troops, money, offices, pardons, chronicles and letters. It could not manufacture the conviction that God intervenes in the affairs of France, or the cult of Michael and Catherine and Margaret, or the expectation of a maid from the marches of Lorraine, or the belief that oil from a vial at Reims makes a king. All of that existed before them, was held by their enemies as fully as by themselves, and had no owner.

A faction can only build an unforgeable claim out of a belief it did not build. That is the whole connection between popular conviction and elite legitimation, and it explains why the material has to be sincerely and widely held rather than merely professed: a belief that everyone privately knew to be a court invention would have supplied no purchase whatever, because the point of appealing to it is that no one can say you made it up.

And the third, from the two coronations. The instrument is not fungible. Reims with the Ampulla was one thing; Notre-Dame with ordinary chrism was another, and the second could not substitute for the first even performed by the party with the better treaty and the larger army. **Where a legitimating act depends on a specific object, a specific place and a specific officiant, the object, the place and the officiant become military objectives** — and a rival who cannot reach them cannot replicate the act at any expense, which is why Charles marched a hundred and fifty miles through enemy country to spend an afternoon in a cathedral.

A note on sources.

Joan's correction of the letter to the English is quoted from the Rouen trial record in the English rendering derived from T. Douglas Murray's translation (1902), which is out of copyright; the same passage appears in W. P. Barrett's translation and in the Orleans manuscript. She made the correction on 22 February 1431 and repeated it when the letter was read in full on 2 March. The letter itself was dictated at Poitiers around 22 March 1429 and sent from Blois in late April; its full text was entered into the condemnation trial transcript and appears in several chronicles.

The coronation of Charles VII at Reims on 17 July 1429, with the Archbishop of Reims officiating and the Holy Ampulla, is standard. Joan's answer about her standard — that it had borne the burden and it was right that it should have the honour — is from the trial record and is quoted in the same rendering.

The coronation of Henry VI at Notre-Dame in Paris on 16 December 1431 by Cardinal Beaufort of Winchester, and the contemporary Parisian criticism of the ceremony, are standard; the *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris* is the principal contemporary source for the criticism and is not quoted here.

The Poitiers examination of March–April 1429, its duration of about three weeks, and Regnault de Chartres's direction of it are standard; the conclusions are treated in the module on the default.

The proposition that the qualification of an author of title is the incapacity to profit, and the proposition that a faction can build an unforgeable claim only out of a belief it did not build, are this study's, developed from the anchor analysis in the companion papers of this project.

MODULE 4

THE ONLY THEOLOGY FACULTY LEFT

Module 4 · formation — a war that split the interpretive class down the middle, a girl formed by exactly the machinery everyone else was formed by, and a king who spent the following decade capturing the appointments

The class was divided

The single most important fact about the interpretive class in this case is that it had two halves and each side had one.

The University of Paris was the pre-eminent theological faculty in Europe and it was Lancastrian. It had been a party to the political settlement since the Cabochien period; its masters staffed the Anglo-Burgundian administration; it pressed for Joan's trial when she was captured, wrote to the Duke of Burgundy demanding she be handed to the Church, and supplied the assessors and the intellectual apparatus of the Rouen proceedings. Pierre Cauchon, who presided, was a Paris master and a former rector.

Poitiers was, in the phrase used in the standard accounts, the only major French centre of theology that remained loyal to Charles VII. He had established a university there in 1431 and a *parlement* in exile there earlier. It was where the examination was held and it was where it had to be held, because there was nowhere else in his obedience with the standing to conduct one.

That division governs the entire case. **When the interpretive class splits along the same line as the armies, its members do not become less authoritative; they become authoritative for one side only** — and every claim either party makes will be certified by its own half and condemned by the other.

Which produces the specific difficulty Charles faced and the specific reason his instrument had to be what it was. **A certificate from his own theologians was worth very little to anybody outside his obedience.** What he needed was something that operated *below* the level at which the faculties disagreed — in a register the ordinary parishioner in Rouen or Troyes or Paris shared with the ordinary parishioner in Bourges.

What formed a fifteenth-century Frenchman

That register is the module's subject and it was not built by any state.

A child in Domrémy in 1420 was made a Christian by the parish. She learned the Pater, the Ave and the Credo from her mother — Joan said so at trial, and said she had learned them from nobody else. She heard mass, kept the fasts, went to confession, saw the saints in the windows and on the walls, heard the sermon, knew the feasts. She knew the bells; Joan told her judges her voices came often when the bells rang.

That machinery cost the crown nothing. It was maintained by the parish, the diocese, the confraternity and the household, it ran identically on both sides of the front, and no faction could switch it on or off.

And the specific furniture in it was exactly what a divine military commission would require. Michael the Archangel, captain of the heavenly host, whose great shrine at Mont-Saint-Michel had famously never fallen to the English and had become the one unconquered place in Normandy. Catherine of Alexandria, who disputed with philosophers and defeated them. Margaret of Antioch, who overcame the dragon. Those are the three Joan named, and they are three of the most widely venerated figures in French popular devotion, whose attributes map onto the mission with a precision that requires no conspiracy to explain: **she was formed by the same material that made the mission legible, and so was everybody who heard her.**

The same is true of the prophetic frame. The expectation of a maid from the marches of Lorraine circulated in vernacular prophecy before she was born. She did not need to have read it. Her audience had heard it.

A claim is checkable only in a vocabulary the checker already possesses, and the reason Joan's claim could travel was that it was made entirely out of things nobody had to be taught.

Probate spiritus

Which is why the examination mattered and why it took three weeks.

The medieval church held both that divine revelation was real and that demonic counterfeit was real, and it maintained a technical literature for telling them apart — the discernment of spirits, on which Gerson had written. That literature is what made a claim of revelation a **testable** proposition rather than an assertion, and it is what made certification worth having.

The surviving summary of the Poitiers conclusions shows the commission doing exactly that work, and its language is careful in a way that repays attention:

> *The king, attending to his own necessity and that of his kingdom, and taking into account the continual prayers to God of his impoverished people and of all others who love peace and justice, must neither cast aside nor reject the Maid, who says she is sent by God to give him comfort and aid; notwithstanding that these promises are merely of human works; nor should he believe in her at once and lightly. But, following Holy Scripture, he ought to test her in two ways: that is, by human prudence, in inquiring into her life, her manners, and her intentions, as says Saint Paul the Apostle: Probate spiritus, si ex Deo sunt; and by devout prayer, to seek a sign of some divine work or hope, by which one may judge whether she has come by the will of God.*

Read what that document does and does not do.

It does not certify that her voices were from God. It says the opposite of certifying: *nor should he believe in her at once and lightly*.

It does not reject her either, and the reason given is Gamaliel's: on the report transmitted in the tradition, the assembly added that to doubt or forsake her without any appearance of evil would be to vex the Holy Spirit.

It certifies that using her is not sinful and recommends that the test be the outcome of Orléans.

That is a masterpiece of institutional drafting and it is worth naming for what it is. The commission was asked an unanswerable question and returned an answerable one. It could not determine the origin of a vision; it could determine that there was no evil in her, that her faith was orthodox, and that in the kingdom's necessity the king might lawfully proceed and look for a sign.

Where certification of a claim is epistemically impossible, an interpretive class will certify the permissibility of acting on it instead — and that is sufficient, because permissibility is all a ruler actually needs.

The capture, ten years later

The last movement of the module is what Charles did to the interpretive class once he was king, and it is the sequence's familiar move arriving on schedule.

On **7 July 1438** he issued the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges. Twenty-three articles, adopted after an assembly of the French clergy had considered the decrees of the Council of Basel. It affirmed the superiority of general councils over the pope and required one every ten years. It required **election** to bishoprics and major benefices rather than papal appointment. It abolished or curtailed annates and other papal exactions. It forbade appeals to Rome from beyond two days' journey.

The Gallican reading of that document is that it freed the French church from Roman interference. The structural reading is the one this sequence has been developing and it is not inconsistent with the first. **An election held in the kingdom, by chapters within the kingdom, under a king who is present and interested, is an appointment the king can influence and the pope cannot.** Contemporaries understood it; the popes fought it for eighty years; and the crown's later kings used it to place royal candidates.

Set that beside the Investiture Contest in this sequence and the shape is exact. Latin ordination is an **institutional** credential and is therefore capturable, and the capture is worth fighting for. Gregory VII and Henry IV fought fifty years over who made bishops. Charles VII, nine years after Reims, took control of the making of bishops in France by statute, in a document everybody read as a liberation.

The man who had needed an uncapturable authorisation in 1429 spent 1438 acquiring a capturable one — and the two are not in tension. He needed the first because he had nothing; he built the second because he was going to have successors.

Reading formation against the framework

The first finding, on a class divided by war. This sequence has asked whether an interpretive class can be captured and has answered by locating the credential. This case adds a condition none of the others met: **the class was split along the front line, and each half certified its own side.**

The consequence is precise. **Where the interpretive class divides on the same axis as the conflict, its certifications become worthless as between the parties and remain valuable within them** — and a ruler in that position cannot win the argument at the level of the faculties. He must make his claim in a register that lies beneath the division, in the shared formation of ordinary believers on both sides, because that is the only ground the enemy's theologians also stand on.

That is what Joan was: **a claim pitched below the level at which the doctors disagreed.** The University of Paris could and did condemn her. It could not make an English archer stop wondering.

The second finding, and it answers the question of what certification can actually deliver. The Poitiers commission did not and could not verify a revelation. What it produced was a finding of no evil, of orthodox faith, and of permissibility in necessity, with the test deferred to the event.

An interpretive class asked to certify the unverifiable will certify permissibility instead, and permissibility is the operative product — because a ruler does not need it to be true that God sent her, he needs it to be lawful for him to proceed as though.

That distinction is available in every tradition with a developed casuistry, and it is why such traditions are so useful to rulers: they can always answer, even when the question has no answer.

And the third. The reason ordinary belief is load-bearing is that it is the substrate in which claims are legible and checkable. A conviction held by everyone, taught by nobody's government, is simultaneously the thing that makes a claim intelligible and the thing that makes it impossible to have fabricated. **Formation the state did not build is the only formation a state can borrow from.**

A note on sources.

The Lancastrian allegiance of the University of Paris, its pressure for Joan's trial, its letters to the Duke of Burgundy after her capture, and its supply of assessors to the Rouen court are standard, as is Pierre Cauchon's Paris background. That Poitiers was the only major French theological centre remaining in Charles VII's obedience is the standard account; the foundation of a university there in 1431 is standard.

Joan's statement that she learned the Pater, Ave and Credo from her mother, and that her voices came often when the bells rang, are from the Rouen trial record.

The devotional prominence of Michael, Catherine and Margaret in fifteenth-century France, the standing of Mont-Saint-Michel, and the circulation of the maid-of-Lorraine prophecy before Joan's birth are standard and are treated at greater length in the earlier study of this case in this project.

The Poitiers conclusions are quoted from the English translation of the surviving summary as transmitted in Quicherat, volume 3, pages 391–392. **The original register — the "Book of Poitiers" — is lost**; it is referred to several times in the condemnation trial and was not produced at the rehabilitation, and the standard accounts hold that it was probably destroyed. The reported addition of the Gamaliel argument — that to doubt or forsake her without any appearance of evil would be to vex the Holy Spirit — comes through the same transmission and is reported as transmitted.

The Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges of 7 July 1438, its twenty-three articles, its conciliarist provisions, its requirement of election to benefices, its treatment of annates and of appeals to Rome, and the long papal campaign against it culminating in the Concordat of Bologna in 1516, are standard.

The reading of the Pragmatic Sanction as an acquisition of appointment power by the crown is the standard scholarly reading and is not novel; the connection drawn here to the Investiture Contest analysis is this study's.

MODULE 5

HE DID NOT PAY THE RANSOM

Module 5 · the cost column — the cheapest legitimating instrument in this collection, the price of abandoning it, and the twenty-five years it took for the bill to arrive

What it cost to acquire

Price the instrument and the figure is almost embarrassing.

An escort of six men from Vaucouleurs to Chinon. Lodging at Poitiers for three weeks. The time of a commission of theologians who were already on the payroll. A horse, a sword, a suit of white armour, a banner painted at Tours. A household of a few servants and a page.

Against the cost of a campaign, that is nothing. **The most consequential legitimating instrument in fifteenth-century Europe cost less than a week's wages for the garrison of Orléans.**

That figure is the module's first finding and it is a general one. **An authorisation drawn from a belief the ruler did not build costs almost nothing to acquire, because the expensive part — the formation of the population that makes the claim intelligible — was paid for over centuries by parishes and households and not by him.** Compare the alternatives available to Charles: an army capable of taking Reims by siege, or a diplomatic settlement with Burgundy, or the purchase of the University of Paris. Each of those costs orders of magnitude more and none of them was on offer.

What it cost to keep

Almost as little, and this is where the accounting turns.

Joan was captured before Compiègne on 23 May 1430 by Burgundian troops. She was held first by Jean de Luxembourg, then at Beaurevoir. The Burgundians offered her for ransom — that was the ordinary practice, and a prisoner of her standing had a price.

Charles did not pay it. The English did: ten thousand *livres tournois*, the sum customarily paid for a prince of the blood, delivered through the Duke of Burgundy in the autumn of 1430. She was handed to Pierre Cauchon in January 1431.

There is no record of a French attempt to ransom, to exchange, to negotiate, or to rescue. Charles held prisoners of his own who could have been offered. He said nothing publicly about her trial. His archbishop, Regnault de Chartres — the same man who had presided at Poitiers — wrote after her capture in terms that were not favourable to her, attributing her fall to her own will and pride.

The silence lasted nineteen years.

Why it was rational at the time

The accounting has to be done honestly and it is not flattering.

By May 1430 the instrument had delivered everything it could deliver. The siege was raised, the Loire cleared, the English field army broken at Patay, and the king anointed at Reims. The attack on Paris in September 1429 had failed and Joan had been wounded; the army had been disbanded; the campaign of 1430 was small and going badly.

A coronation cannot be un-performed. Charles was anointed. The oil had been used. The Archbishop of Reims had officiated. Whatever happened to Joan afterwards, that fact was in the world.

So at the moment of her capture the marginal value of the instrument to the king was, on any cold reading, close to zero — and the marginal cost of ransoming her was real: money he did not have, a negotiation with Burgundy he was already conducting on other terms, and the reacquisition of a person who had become politically awkward. The court that had used her had begun to find her difficult well before Compiègne.

An instrument that costs nothing to acquire also costs nothing to abandon, and a ruler doing the arithmetic in 1430 would abandon it. He did.

What it cost in the end

And then the bill arrived, twenty-five years late, in a form the 1430 arithmetic could not have priced.

On 30 May 1431 Joan was burned at Rouen as a relapsed heretic. The verdict's political content was explicit in the English purpose from the start: if the woman who had brought Charles to Reims was a heretic and a sorceress, then the anointing she had procured was procured by diabolic means.

The claim did not take in 1431 and it did not need to. **It sat on the record.** And a verdict of an ecclesiastical court, unreversed, is a permanent instrument in the hands of anyone who later wishes to use it — in a succession dispute, in a papal negotiation, in

the mouth of an English claimant, in the hands of a rebellious prince.

Charles's own son rebelled against him repeatedly. The English claim to the French crown was not formally renounced until 1801. The Burgundian house remained a danger for forty years. Any of them could pick the verdict up.

So the cost of the 1430 economy was the necessity of the 1456 repair, and the repair was expensive: a papal application, an inquisitor-general, a tribunal of eight bishops, an archbishop, a cardinal and five inquisitors, one hundred and thirty-five depositions collected across four years, a dossier nearly four times the thickness of the one it overturned, and — as the module on plurality will show — a political cost among the men Charles had amnestied.

He saved ten thousand livres in 1430 and spent four years of an inquisitorial process in the 1450s to undo the consequence. That is not a moral judgement. It is the entry.

What the order cost otherwise

The rest of the column can be set out briefly, because it belongs to the war and not to the instrument.

The **countryside** paid for the whole of it, continuously, and paid twice — in the *taille* to the king's companies and in the exactions of the free companies the 1439 ordinance was written to suppress. The *écorcheurs* — the flayers — are the fifteenth-century French name for demobilised soldiers living off the population, and they are the standing condition of the period.

The **towns** paid in sieges, sacks and the purchase of confirmations.

The **nobility** paid in the *Praguerie* of 1440 — a revolt of great lords, including the Dauphin Louis, against the ordinances that were taking their military independence — and lost.

And the **church in France** paid, after 1438, in the annates it stopped sending to Rome and in the appointments it stopped receiving from there, which is a payment from Rome to the crown routed through a document about liberties.

Reading the cost column against the framework

The first finding, on the price of borrowed belief. This sequence has priced legitimating instruments before: a hundred thousand dinars for a caliph's daughter, a thousand ingots and fifty-nine thousand bolts of silk for an Imperial Preceptor, a jade seal, a Pragmatic Sanction. This case supplies the floor.

Where the belief a ruler appeals to was formed by the population itself, the instrument's acquisition cost approaches zero, because the ruler is not buying the belief — he is buying a person who can stand inside it. Charles paid for an escort, a horse and three weeks of lodging. The four centuries of parish formation that made the claim intelligible were already paid for.

Which produces the uncomfortable corollary that this module exists to state. **An instrument acquired for nothing is an instrument nobody has an incentive to protect.** The Seljuks married their caliph's daughter and guarded his person for a century and a half because they had paid for him and could not replace him. Charles had paid nothing and let his instrument be sold to the English for ten thousand livres of somebody else's money.

The cheapness that makes such an instrument attractive is the same property that guarantees it will be abandoned, and any case in which a ruler acquires legitimacy at negligible cost should be expected to end with the source discarded.

The second finding, on where the deferred cost lands. The 1430 calculation was correct about the throne and wrong about the record. A coronation cannot be un-performed; a verdict cannot be un-entered.

Abandoning an author of title costs nothing immediately and creates a permanent liability in the archive, available to any future opponent who needs an argument. A ruler pricing such a decision is comparing a present sum against a contingent claim with no expiry, and will systematically under-value the second — which is why the repair, when it comes, comes decades later, expensively, and from a position of security rather than of need.

A note on sources.

The escort from Vaucouleurs, the journey to Chinon in February 1429, the examination at Poitiers, and the equipping at Tours are standard; no monetary figures are given for them because the surviving accounts do not support a total.

Joan's capture before Compiègne on 23 May 1430, her custody by Jean de Luxembourg and confinement at Beaurevoir, and the sum of ten thousand *livres tournois* paid by the English through the Duke of Burgundy are as reported in the standard accounts; the figure is the one conventionally given and corresponds to the customary ransom for a prince of the blood. The absence of any recorded French attempt at ransom or exchange is a negative finding of the record and is stated as such. Regnault de Chartres's unfavourable letter following her capture is standard.

The failed assault on Paris in September 1429 and Joan's wounding there are standard. Her execution at Rouen on 30 May 1431 as a relapsed heretic is standard.

The composition of the 1455–56 tribunal — eight bishops, an archbishop, a cardinal and five inquisitors — and the one hundred and thirty-five depositions collected between 1452 and 1456, and the dossier's size relative to that of 1431, are as reported in the standard accounts and are treated further in the module on the default.

The *écorcheurs*, the ordinance of 1439, and the *Praguerie* of 1440 are standard. The annates provisions of the Pragmatic Sanction are treated in Module 4.

The propositions that an instrument acquired for nothing is an instrument nobody protects, and that abandoning an author of title creates a permanent archival liability that is systematically under-priced, are this study's.

MODULE 6

THE TAILLE MADE PERPETUAL

Module 6 · extraction — the mechanism by which an anointing turns into money, and the ordinance of 1439 that is the most important document of the reign

Two ways of getting money

A late-medieval French king could obtain revenue in two ways and the difference between them is the difference between a claimant and a king.

He could **negotiate**. Summon the estates of a province or of the *langue d'oïl*, put the necessity to them, receive a grant for a term, and come back when it ran out. Every such grant is a transaction. The grantors set conditions, complain of grievances, and remember that they gave.

Or he could **assess**. Fix a sum, apportion it among the *élections*, and send collectors. That is not a transaction. It is an act of sovereignty, and the subject's role in it is to pay.

Through the 1420s Charles VII was in the first position, and in the worst version of it: a claimant asking assemblies in a shrunken obedience for grants to fight a war he was losing, with the assemblies well aware that a claimant who loses will not be collecting anything.

What changed

In November 1439, at Orléans, an assembly of the estates considered the disorder of the companies and the depredations of the soldiery, and issued the ordinance that is the foundation of the French fiscal state.

Its provisions: no one but the king may raise men of war; captains are to be appointed by the king and answerable to him; the *taille* is to be levied for the payment of the companies.

And the *taille* was not renewed. It was simply levied, year after year, without further grant, and it went on being levied for three hundred and fifty years.

That is the transformation, and it should be stated in the plainest possible terms. **A negotiated grant became an assessed tax, and the estates of the *langue d'oïl* were not summoned again for a general grant during the reign.**

Why it was possible

Now the connection this module exists to make, because it is the concrete answer to the question of what belief is worth in money.

A permanent tax is a concession made to an **office**, not to a person and not to a claimant. It requires the grantors to accept that the thing they are funding will outlast the negotiation — that there is a crown, that it has needs of its own, that its defence of the realm is a permanent function rather than a party's war effort.

In 1428 nobody could have granted Charles that, and not out of meanness. **A claimant cannot receive a permanent tax because a permanent tax presupposes the permanence of the claim**, and the whole question in dispute was whether the claim was permanent or whether it would end in a treaty, a battle or an assassination.

By 1439 that question had been answered — not by argument but by the accumulation of facts, of which the anointing at Reims was the first and the largest. He was the anointed king; the Burgundians had come over at Arras; Paris had been recovered; the war was now visibly the kingdom's war rather than a faction's.

The sequence matters and it is exact: **Reims 1429, Arras 1435, Paris 1436, the permanent *taille* 1439, the standing army 1445.** Each is the precondition of the next. And the first item on the list is a ceremony in a cathedral that cost the price of an escort and a horse.

That is the mechanism by which belief becomes money. It does not do it directly. It does it by converting a party into an institution, and an institution can be assessed for where a party can only be subscribed to.

Who paid

The *taille* was a direct tax on non-noble, non-clerical households, apportioned downward from a fixed total. The nobility were exempt as men who served in person; the clergy were exempt as men who prayed. What that means arithmetically is that a permanent tax levied to fund a standing army was paid by the cultivators and townsmen of France and by nobody else.

Set beside it the *aides* on transactions and the *gabelle* on salt, and the fifteenth-century French fiscal system emerges in the shape it would keep until 1789: **a substantial permanent revenue, raised without consent, from the classes that had no exemption.**

The relation to the war has to be entered honestly on both sides. The standing army the *taille* funded is what ended the free companies, and the free companies were a

worse burden on the countryside than the tax. Contemporaries said so. **The peasant of 1450 paid more to the king and less to everyone else, and was probably better off** — which is a real improvement and is also the ordinary way a state consolidates: by monopolising an extraction that was previously competitive.

Reading extraction against the framework

The finding, and it is the sequence's most concrete statement of what legitimation is worth. This series has repeatedly found doctrine wrapped around extraction and has been right to look. Here the causation runs the other way and can be dated.

Legitimation converts negotiated revenue into assessed revenue, and that conversion is the mechanism by which belief becomes money. A claimant subscribes; a king assesses. The difference between the two is not force — Charles's coercive capacity in 1439 was not obviously greater than in 1429, and the army the *taille* funded was built afterwards, out of it. The difference is that the grantors had come to regard the crown as a permanent office with permanent needs, and the anointing at Reims is the single largest event in producing that change.

State it as a proposition to test: **the date at which a contested regime obtains a tax it does not have to renew is the date at which its legitimation has completed, and it is a better indicator than any declaration, treaty or coronation, because it records what the payers believed rather than what the ruler claimed.**

And the second finding, on the direction of the whole apparatus. Once the permanent *taille* existed, the borrowed authorisation had done its work and was structurally redundant. Charles never needed another prophet. He needed collectors.

Every borrowed legitimation is a bridge to an assessed revenue, and once the revenue is assessed the bridge is not maintained — which is the fiscal statement of the finding the cost column reached by a different road, and it is why the woman who made the king was left in a Burgundian prison while the king built a treasury.

A note on sources.

The distinction between negotiated grants by assemblies of estates and assessed taxation is standard for the period. The ordinance of November 1439 at Orléans, its provisions restricting the raising of men of war to the king and providing for the payment of the companies from the *taille*, and the subsequent levying of the *taille* without further grant, are standard; the claim that the estates of the *langue d'oïl* were not again summoned for a general grant in the reign follows the standard accounts.

The *compagnies d'ordonnance* of 1445, the *francs-archers* of 1448, the exemptions of nobility and clergy from the *taille*, and the *aides* and *gabelle* are standard. No figures are given for the yield of the *taille* at any date, because the surviving accounts support scholarly reconstructions rather than a single reliable series.

The *écorcheurs* and the burden of the free companies, and the contemporary view that the standing army reduced it, are standard and are treated in Module 5.

The proposition that legitimation converts negotiated revenue into assessed revenue, and that the date of an unrenewed tax is the best indicator of a completed legitimation, is this study's.

MODULE 7

THE BOOK OF POITIERS IS MISSING

Module 7 · information and suppression — a certificate destroyed by the party that commissioned it, two enormous dossiers produced by opposing courts about one woman, and a defendant correcting her own record

The document that is not there

The most informative object in this case is one that does not exist.

The examination at Poitiers produced a register — the *Book of Poitiers* — containing the questions, Joan's answers and the commission's conclusions. It is referred to repeatedly in the condemnation trial: Joan herself told her Rouen judges that a book of the Poitiers proceedings existed and, when pressed on points of her mission, referred them to it. She was, in effect, telling a hostile court that her certificate was on file.

It was not produced at Rouen. It was not produced at the rehabilitation twenty-five years later. It has never been found.

What survives is a summary of the conclusions, transmitted at second hand, of about a paragraph. The standard accounts hold that the register was probably destroyed, and the finger points at Regnault de Chartres, Archbishop of Reims and Chancellor of France — the man who presided over the examination, crowned the king, and afterwards wrote about Joan's capture in terms unfavourable to her.

That is: **the certificate that made the king was destroyed by the king's own chancellor.**

Why a certificate is destroyed

The reason is not mysterious once the instrument is understood, and it is the module's first finding.

A certificate of the Poitiers kind is valuable while it is *cited* and dangerous while it is *readable*. Cited, it says: the learned men examined her and found no evil. Readable, it says a great deal more — the exact questions, the exact hedges, the precise formula about necessity, the deferral of proof to the outcome at Orléans, and whatever Joan said

under three weeks of questioning that the commission chose not to summarise.

Every one of those specifics is ammunition. A document that says *we did not certify her revelations, we certified that the king might lawfully proceed* is a document an enemy can read aloud.

A certification is strongest as a reported conclusion and weakest as a producible text, because the text contains the qualifications and the conclusion does not. Any party holding such a document and expecting hostile scrutiny has an interest in the summary surviving and the register not.

The rule generalises and it is worth carrying: **where a legitimating examination's conclusion is famous and its record is lost, suspect the losing was done by the beneficiary.**

Two dossiers about one woman

Against that absence stand the two most extensively documented judicial proceedings of the European Middle Ages, produced by opposing parties, about the same person, twenty-five years apart.

Rouen, 1431. A trial conducted by Pierre Cauchon, bishop of Beauvais, sitting by a grant of jurisdiction from the chapter of Rouen because he was outside his own diocese; assessors drawn largely from the University of Paris; the vice-inquisitor's participation obtained with difficulty because canon law required it. Public sessions in February and March; private examinations in the prison; seventy articles of accusation reduced to twelve; the abjuration in the cemetery of Saint-Ouen on 24 May; the relapse; the burning on 30 May. The proceedings were recorded by notaries, compared each evening, and afterwards rendered into Latin.

Rouen and Paris, 1455–56. A retrial authorised by Calixtus III on the petition of Joan's mother Isabelle Romée and her brothers, directed by the inquisitor-general Jean Bréhal, with a tribunal including bishops from both former obediences, foreign clergy and five inquisitors. Depositions from one hundred and thirty-five witnesses collected between 1452 and 1456 — men who had known her at Domrémy, escorted her to Chinon, fought beside her, guarded her at Rouen, and served on the court that killed her. The dossier is reported as nearly four times the thickness of its predecessor.

Two enormous archives of testimony, both produced to establish a political conclusion, and each preserving material the other would have suppressed. That is the best evidentiary position in this entire sequence and it exists only because the town changed hands.

What the second dossier is for

Read the 1456 proceedings for what they attack and the political engineering is exact.

They do not attack the theology. The court did not undertake to establish that Joan's voices came from God, which was as unprovable in 1456 as in 1431.

They attack the **procedure**. That the tribunal was improperly constituted. That Cauchon lacked jurisdiction and had a secular interest. That the accused was denied counsel. That she was held in a secular prison guarded by English soldiers rather than in an ecclesiastical one. That the twelve articles misrepresented her answers. That the abjuration was obtained by fear and that she did not understand what she signed.

The verdict of 7 July 1456 declares the earlier proceedings to have contained deceit, slander, contradiction and manifest error of law and of fact, nullifies and annuls them, and strips them entirely of effect. A copy of the 1431 articles was then ritually torn up.

They achieved a theological result by legal means, which is the only route available when the theological question cannot be adjudicated. Establishing that the process was void establishes that the finding of heresy has no standing, which establishes that the anointing was not procured by a convicted heretic — without anyone having to certify a revelation.

That is the same move Poitiers made in 1429 from the other end. Poitiers could not certify the vision and certified permissibility. Rouen in 1456 could not refute the vision's condemnation and voided the condemnation. **An institution asked an unanswerable question will answer an adjacent answerable one, and the adjacent answer does the work.**

The defendant correcting the record

One further thing belongs in this module because it is unique in the collection.

Joan corrected her own trial record. On 22 February and again on 2 March 1431 she interrupted the reading of her letter to point out three phrases she had not dictated, including the one that made the surrender owed to her rather than to the king. She refused to answer certain questions and said she would answer them on a named day. She told the court that a register of her earlier examination existed and referred them to it.

A defendant in a fifteenth-century heresy trial was auditing the prosecution's exhibits, and the corrections were entered. They were entered because the notaries were doing their work properly, and the fact that they were entered is what made the 1456 nullification possible — the record of a rigged trial, kept honestly by its clerks, is the evidence that convicts it.

That is worth stating as a caution about how such records fail. **The distortion in a partisan judicial record is usually in the framing and the selection rather than in the transcription**, because the clerks are professionals with their own standards and no stake in the outcome — which is why the 1431 dossier could be turned against its own makers twenty-five years later by men reading it closely.

Reading the seam against the framework

The first finding, on the fate of certificates. The Poitiers register is lost and the Poitiers conclusion is famous, and that combination is not an accident of preservation.

A legitimating certificate is an asset as a citation and a liability as a text. Its qualifications, hedges and conditions are what an enemy needs; its headline is what a friend needs. A party that expects hostile scrutiny will therefore preserve the summary and lose the register, and the pattern is diagnostic: where the conclusion of an examination is universally reported and the record of it has vanished, look first at whoever benefited from the conclusion.

The second finding, on why this case is so well documented. The archive exists because the front line moved. Rouen fell to Charles in November 1449; the inquiry began the following March. **A defeated party's judicial records become the victor's evidence, and the reopening of a verdict is therefore a function of territory rather than of justice** — which is the sequence's recurring point about the archive arriving in a new direction.

And the third, which is the answer to how contested legitimacy questions get settled at all. Neither the 1431 court nor the 1456 court could determine whether God had spoken to a girl in Domrémy. Both were nevertheless required to produce a determination with legal effect.

Where the substantive question is unanswerable, institutions relocate it to a procedural one and answer that instead — permissibility in 1429, jurisdiction and process in 1456. The relocation is not evasion; it is the only technique available, and it is why developed legal and theological traditions are so serviceable to power. They can always return a verdict.

A note on sources.

The existence of the *Book of Poitiers*, Joan's references to it during the condemnation trial, its non-production at Rouen in 1431 and at the rehabilitation, and its loss, are standard; the attribution of its destruction to Regnault de Chartres is the standard suggestion and is reported here as a suggestion rather than as established. The surviving summary of the conclusions is treated in Module 4.

The 1431 proceedings — Cauchon's grant of jurisdiction from the chapter of Rouen, his citation of *diffamatio*, the vice-inquisitor Jean Le Maistre's required participation, the public and private examinations, the seventy articles reduced to twelve, the abjuration at Saint-Ouen on 24 May, the relapse and the execution on 30 May — are standard. The nightly comparison of the notaries' records and the subsequent Latin rendering are as reported.

The 1452 inquiry under Cardinal d'Estouteville, the earlier inquiry by Guillaume Bouillé in 1450, the petition by Isabelle Romée and her sons, the authorisation by Calixtus III, Jean Bréhal's direction, the composition of the tribunal, the one hundred and thirty-five depositions taken between 1452 and 1456, and the verdict of 7 July 1456 with its language of deceit, slander, contradiction and manifest error of law and of fact, are as reported in the standard accounts; the nullification formula is quoted from the English rendering of the text printed in DuParc's edition. The ritual tearing up of the 1431 articles is as reported.

Joan's corrections to the letter on 22 February and 2 March 1431 are treated in Module 3 with their sources.

The propositions that a certificate is an asset as a citation and a liability as a text, and that partisan judicial records typically distort in framing rather than in transcription, are this study's.

MODULE 8

PROBATE SPIRITUS

Module 8 · elite coordination and the default — a king who twice needed a verdict he could not write, the tribunal he built in 1456 so that it could have said no, and the difference between the two attempts

The same problem, twice

Charles VII faced the identical structural problem in 1429 and in 1455, and the second time he solved it much better. Comparing the two attempts is the most instructive thing in this study.

In 1429 he needed a statement that a girl claiming divine commission was not a fraud or a heretic, so that he could use her. He could not issue it himself. He convened a commission of theologians at Poitiers under his own chancellor, in his own obedience, in the only theological centre he had, and they sat for three weeks and gave him a carefully hedged finding of permissibility.

In 1455 he needed a statement that the woman who had brought him to Reims had not been a heretic, so that his anointing could not be impeached. He could not issue that himself either.

The difference in how he went about it is twenty-five years of education in exactly the property this sequence has been tracking.

What was wrong with Poitiers

Poitiers was the best he could do in 1429 and it had a structural defect that everybody could see.

The commission was assembled by the king, composed of the king's clergy, presided over by the king's chancellor, in the king's capital, to answer a question on which the king's survival depended. Its members' benefices, appointments and futures ran through him.

A tribunal that cannot say no cannot say yes. That is the finding this sequence reached at Fatehpur Sikri, where Akbar obtained signatures from men he had spent five years making unable to refuse, and got a document a provincial judge overturned

within nine months.

The Poitiers commission was in a milder version of the same position, and the drafting shows that its members knew it. They did not certify the revelation; they certified that the king might lawfully proceed and recommended that the test be the outcome at Orléans. **They deferred the verdict to an event they did not control**, which is what a body under pressure does when it wants its finding to survive scrutiny. If Orléans had not been relieved, the conclusion would have cost them nothing, because they had not made one.

The other half of the answer is what the University of Paris did with it. Nothing. The Poitiers finding had no purchase whatever outside Charles's obedience, and the Rouen court in 1431 was untroubled by it — they asked for the register, did not get it, and proceeded.

What was different in 1456

Now the 1455–56 process, and every feature of its design addresses the defect.

The petitioners were not the king. The appeal was brought by Joan's mother Isabelle Romée and her brothers Jean and Pierre — a private family seeking the good name of a dead relative. The crown's name is not on the application.

The authority was not the king's. It came from Rome, by bull of Calixtus III, and the proceedings were directed by the inquisitor-general of France, Jean Bréhal.

The tribunal was not the king's men. It included bishops, an archbishop, a cardinal and five inquisitors, foreign clergy including an inquisitor from Vienna and a number of Italians, and — the crucial item — clergy who had been associated with **both sides** during the war.

And the evidence was not curated to a conclusion. One hundred and thirty-five witnesses over four years, including surviving members of the 1431 court, several of whom gave evasive testimony and claimed not to remember whether she had been tortured.

Set that beside Poitiers and the contrast is complete. **In 1429 Charles assembled a body that could not refuse him. In 1455 he arranged a body that could.**

That is the specification, and he had learned it. A verdict from a tribunal of foreigners, papal appointees and former enemies, on a petition from a peasant widow, is worth something precisely because none of those parties owed him the answer. A verdict from a commission of his own chancellor's colleagues would have been worth what the Poitiers finding was worth in Rouen, which was nothing.

Why the two attempts had different shapes

The reason he could do in 1455 what he could not do in 1429 is not that he had become wiser. It is that he had become **secure**.

A ruler in crisis cannot afford a tribunal that might say no, because the cost of a refusal is immediate and fatal. So he convenes one that will say yes, and receives a verdict discounted accordingly.

A ruler who is secure can afford the risk, and therefore obtains a verdict at full value.

Which produces a genuinely uncomfortable proposition: the quality of the authorisation a ruler can obtain is inversely proportional to how badly he needs it. In extremity he can only get certificates from parties he controls, which are worth little; in security he can get certificates from parties he does not control, which are worth a great deal and which he no longer requires for anything except the record.

That is the general form of what the whole sequence has been finding. Akbar in 1579 needed the *maḥẓar* urgently and got one worth nine months. Charles in 1429 needed Poitiers urgently and got a hedge. Charles in 1455 needed nothing at all and got a papal nullification by an international tribunal that stood for five centuries and eventually supported a canonisation.

The default

What happened when nobody was enforcing, in the years between?

The answer is that **the anointing held and the verdict sat**. From 1431 to 1456 Charles VII was, in the eyes of most of France and eventually all of it, the anointed king; and the ecclesiastical record of the realm contained a judgement that the woman who had brought him to the anointing was a relapsed heretic burned for it. Both facts were true simultaneously for twenty-five years and nothing forced a resolution.

That is the default of a legitimacy dispute and it is worth naming, because the framework's instinct is to expect resolution. **Contested legitimations do not resolve; they coexist, with one in possession and the other on file**, and which one becomes operative depends on whether anybody with an interest picks the filed one up. Nobody did — not the English after 1435, not the Burgundians, not the Dauphin Louis in his rebellions.

A dormant claim is not a settled question. It is an option held by whoever finds it useful next, and the reason Charles eventually spent four years and a papal process closing it is that he had learned to price options.

Reading the default against the framework

The first finding, and it is this study's sharpest contribution to the sequence. The condition for a valuable authorisation is that the issuer could have refused, and a ruler's ability to obtain such an issuer varies inversely with his need.

The certificates a ruler obtains in extremity are cheap because they are compelled, and the certificates he obtains in security are dear because they are not — so the instrument is least available exactly when it is most needed. Poitiers hedged; Fatehpur Sikri collapsed in nine months; Canossa worked only because the instrument's own rules compelled the issuer against his interest. This is the structural reason why legitimation crises are so dangerous: the market for authorisations is closed to the desperate.

And it explains the peculiar shape of Charles's career. He acquired his authorisation in 1429 from the one source available to a desperate man — **not an institution but a person outside every institution**, whose testimony could not be discounted as compelled because there was nothing to compel her with. That is the only kind of author a ruler in extremity can get, and it is why such rulers reach for prophets rather than for faculties.

The second finding, on the design of the 1456 tribunal. Charles did four things and each of them removes his fingerprints: a private petitioner, a papal authority, an international bench including former enemies, and an unmanaged evidentiary process running four years. That is a ruler who has understood that **the value of a verdict is a function of the tribunal's capacity to have reached the other one.**

Wherever a ruler deliberately widens a tribunal beyond his own party, read it as evidence that he understands the requirement and is strong enough to meet it — and expect it to occur, as it does here, decades after the crisis it addresses.

A note on sources.

The Poitiers commission's composition, its direction by Regnault de Chartres, its duration and its conclusions are treated in Modules 3, 4 and 7 with their sources. That the Rouen court of 1431 asked for the Poitiers register and did not obtain it is standard.

The 1455–56 process — the petition of Isabelle Romée and her sons Jean and Pierre, the bull of Calixtus III, the direction by Jean Bréhal, the composition of the tribunal including eight bishops, an archbishop, a cardinal, five inquisitors, an inquisitor from Vienna and a number of Italians, and clergy formerly associated with both sides, the depositions of one hundred and thirty-five witnesses taken between

1452 and 1456, the hearings from 16 December 1455 to 28 May 1456, and the verdict of 7 July 1456 — is as reported in the standard accounts. The evasiveness of surviving members of the 1431 court, including on the question of torture, is likewise reported.

The comparison with Akbar's *maḥẓar* of 1579 and with Canossa in 1077 draws on the companion studies in this sequence, where the material is documented.

The proposition that the quality of an available authorisation is inversely proportional to a ruler's need for it, and the reading of the 1456 tribunal's design as a deliberate satisfaction of the refusability condition, are this study's.

MODULE 9

THE ARCHBISHOP WHO WOULD NOT DIE

Module 9 · plurality or foreclosure — the men Charles had pardoned and therefore could not convict, an amnesty that bound the party that granted it, and the line below which none of it reached

Nineteen years of silence

Joan was burned on 30 May 1431. Charles VII said nothing about it for nineteen years.

The standard readings of that silence are ingratitude, embarrassment, or the calculation the cost column set out — that the instrument had done its work and the marginal value of protesting was nil. All of those have force. None of them explains why the silence broke when it did, and the explanation that does is the subject of this module, because it identifies a counterweight the framework has not previously named.

The dates are the argument. **Rouen fell to Charles in November 1449.** In **March 1450** he commissioned Guillaume Bouillé to inquire into the trial. Bouillé examined seven witnesses and the inquiry was **suddenly broken off**.

Six years then passed before a verdict.

Why it stopped

The reason the 1450 inquiry stopped is the finding.

Reopening the trial meant establishing that the 1431 court had acted maliciously, without jurisdiction, and in the service of a secular vendetta — which meant establishing that its members had committed grave offences.

And by 1450 a great many of those members were Charles VII's own men.

Raoul Roussel had participated in the 1431 proceedings, had been a fervent supporter of the English cause in Normandy, was Archbishop of Rouen, and took the oath of loyalty to Charles in 1450. He was, in the standard accounts, the greatest single obstacle to reopening the trial.

Jean de Mailly had signed letters in the name of Henry VI guaranteeing English protection to everyone who had participated in the case against Joan. He converted to Charles's cause in 1443 and was Bishop of Noyon.

They were not exceptions. The recovery of Normandy and of Paris had been accomplished substantially by **reconciliation** — by receiving the submission of Anglo-Burgundian officeholders, confirming them in their places, and guaranteeing them against retrospective proceedings. That is how Arras had worked in 1435 and how the reconquest worked afterwards.

An amnesty is a grant, and a grant binds the granting party. Charles had bought the north with pardons, and one of the things he had pardoned was the conduct of the men who had killed Joan. He could not now convict them without repudiating the instrument by which he had recovered his kingdom — and every officeholder in Normandy would have noticed.

So the inquiry stopped. The 1452 investigation under Cardinal d'Estouteville produced little, because the Rouen canons could not remember anything. Bréhal went on collecting opinions from canonists. And then, in December 1452, **Roussel died**, and the standard accounts are explicit that his death removed a substantial obstacle.

The formal appeal was lodged in November 1455.

The counterweight nobody designed

That sequence is a counterweight in the framework's precise sense: a party the ruler could not overrule, holding a position he could not take, obliging him to wait.

And nobody designed it. It arose from the technical form of the instrument by which the war had been won. **A reconciliation settlement creates a class of protected men whose protection the ruler cannot withdraw without destroying the settlement**, and that class then has a veto over any proceeding that would touch them.

The comparison across this sequence is exact and worth making. The Seljuk case found counterweights arising from the technical form of institutions. The Investiture case found them bought in a bidding war. The Mughal case found them in the ruler's instruments being confessionally shaped. The Mongol case found them in a plural patron.

This case adds: counterweights created by an amnesty. Their signature is distinctive. They protect the *previously hostile* rather than the loyal. They are strongest immediately after a reconquest and weaken as their beneficiaries die. They cannot be revoked without unravelling the peace. And they are entirely invisible in the documents, because an amnesty's whole purpose is that the thing amnestied is not discussed.

Where a ruler has recovered territory by pardon rather than by conquest, expect a decade or more in which he cannot investigate anything that happened there.

What else stood in the way

Two further parties held real positions and both should be entered.

Rome. Charles could not simply order a French ecclesiastical court to reverse a French ecclesiastical court, and he had spent 1438 restricting appeals to Rome. So the retrial required a papal bull, from a pope whose predecessors had been fighting the Pragmatic Sanction for seventeen years. That the authority was obtained is a fact about the crown's diplomatic position; that it was needed is a fact about the limits of Gallican liberty.

The University of Paris. By the 1450s it was in Charles's obedience, but its masters had supplied the 1431 court and its corporate reputation was implicated. It is not a coincidence that the 1456 verdict laid the blame on Cauchon personally and on a secular vendetta rather than on the faculty.

The blame was concentrated on a dead man, which is what a court does when the living have to be kept.

What a subject could do

The grading, as in the other studies, and it is short.

A great lord could rebel; the *Praguerie* of 1440 shows what that was worth, which was a negotiated pardon and the loss of the military independence at issue. The Dauphin Louis rebelled repeatedly and was exiled to Dauphiné.

A reconciled officeholder could hold his position and, as this module shows, obstruct.

A town could bargain its submission for confirmations of privilege.

A peasant paid the *taille* and, before the *taille*, the companies. The improvement between the two is real and was not something he chose.

And a woman of nineteen with a divine commission could ride to Chinon and change the succession of France — which happened once, is the reason this case is famous, and should not be mistaken for a route that was generally available. It required a war that had split the interpretive class, a claimant with nothing to lose, and a set of prophetic expectations that fitted her biography. **Nothing in this order gave ordinary people leverage. One extraordinary conjunction gave one of them a great deal, briefly, and then sold her for ten thousand livres of somebody else's money.**

Reading liberty against the framework

The first finding. An amnesty is a legitimating settlement's payment, and it binds the payer.

Where a ruler recovers territory by pardoning its officeholders, he acquires a class of men who cannot be prosecuted for what they did before the pardon, and who therefore hold a veto over any inquiry into it — a veto that expires only with their deaths. The nineteen-year silence between Joan's burning and the effective reopening of her case is not primarily explained by the king's indifference. It is explained by the fact that his Archbishop of Rouen had sat on the court that killed her and had just sworn loyalty to him, and did not die until December 1452.

That is a testable expectation for every case of reconquest by reconciliation: **date the reopening of the losing side's judicial and administrative record from the mortality of the amnestied, not from the recovery of the territory.**

The second finding, on how such a reopening is finally managed. The 1456 verdict blamed Pierre Cauchon, who had been dead since 1442, and characterised the proceedings as a secular vendetta rather than as a corporate failure of the French church or its greatest university.

Where a legitimacy repair requires convicting somebody, the conviction will be concentrated on the dead and on individuals rather than on institutions, because institutions have living members whose cooperation is still needed. That is not cynicism; it is the only form in which such a repair can be completed at all, and its cost is that the institutional causes of the original act go unexamined.

A note on sources.

The fall of Rouen in November 1449, Guillaume Bouillé's inquiry of March 1450 with seven witnesses examined before it was broken off, Cardinal d'Estouteville's investigation of 1452, Jean Bréhal's collection of canonists' and theologians' opinions, the death of Archbishop Raoul Roussel in December 1452, and the formal appeal of November 1455 are as reported in the standard accounts.

Raoul Roussel's participation in the 1431 proceedings, his support for the English cause in Normandy, his oath to Charles in 1450 and his role as an obstacle to the reopening are as reported, as are Jean de Mailly's signature of letters in Henry VI's name guaranteeing protection to participants in the case, his conversion to Charles's cause in 1443, and his bishopric of Noyon.

The recovery of Normandy and Paris substantially by reconciliation and confirmation of officeholders is standard. The Pragmatic Sanction's restriction of

appeals to Rome is treated in Module 4; the necessity of a papal bull for the retrial is treated in Module 8. Pierre Cauchon died in 1442. The *Praguerie* of 1440 and the Dauphin Louis's rebellions and exile to Dauphiné are standard.

The identification of amnesty-created protection as a distinct generator of counterweights, and the propositions that such a reopening is dated by the mortality of the amnestied and that its convictions concentrate on the dead, are this study's.

MODULE 10

THE ACCUSATIONS WERE TORN UP

Module 10 · change and collapse — a repair completed a year before the king's heir fled the kingdom, and a myth that outlived every regime that used it

The order of events

Set out the last decade and the sequence explains itself.

1449, November. Rouen recovered. The archive of the 1431 trial passes into Charles VII's hands. **1450, March.** Bouillé's inquiry; seven witnesses; broken off. **1450, 15 April.** Formigny. Normandy falls within months. **1452.** D'Estouteville's investigation; little obtained. Bréhal continues collecting opinions. **1452, December.** Archbishop Roussel dies. **1453, 17 July.** Castillon. Talbot killed; Gascony falls; the war ends. **1455, November.** Formal appeal lodged by Isabelle Romée and her sons under bull of Calixtus III. **1455–56, 16 December to 28 May.** Depositions. **1456, 7 July.** The condemnation of 1431 declared to contain deceit, slander, contradiction and manifest error of law and of fact; nullified, voided, annulled and stripped of all effect. A copy of the articles ritually torn up.

The repair was completed three years after the war ended and seven years after the town was taken. It waited for territory, for a death, and for peace, in that order.

What was repaired and what was not

Be precise about the scope of the 1456 verdict, because its limits are the point.

It nullified a process. It did not certify a revelation. The formula annuls the proceedings and declares Joan and her family free of any mark or stain of disrepute; it does not declare that God spoke to her.

That is exactly the right instrument for the job. Charles's exposure was never that his anointing lacked divine warrant — nobody could adjudicate that either way. His exposure was that an ecclesiastical court of record had convicted the procurer of that anointing of heresy, and that the conviction stood unreversed and available.

Void the conviction and the exposure closes. Whether the voices were real remains as open as it was in 1429 and as it is now, and the crown never needed it closed.

A legitimacy repair does not have to establish the positive claim. It only has to remove the standing negative finding — which is a far easier operation and is why it was achievable at all.

The immediate afterlife

The repair was completed on 7 July 1456. The following year Charles VII's heir fled the kingdom.

The Dauphin Louis, who had rebelled in 1440 and been exiled to Dauphiné, took refuge with **Philip the Good of Burgundy** in 1456 and remained there until his father died in 1461. Charles VII spent his last years in fear of being poisoned by his son, and died in July 1461 at Mehun-sur-Yèvre.

Louis XI's first substantive act toward the church was to **revoke the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges**, by ordinance of 27 November 1461 — the instrument his father had used to take control of French ecclesiastical appointments, given up within four months of the accession, in exchange for papal goodwill and a negotiated arrangement that in practice preserved royal influence over nominations anyway.

Everything Charles VII built out of institutions survived him. The one thing he built out of a person did not need to survive him, because it had already been converted into institutions: a permanent tax, a standing army, an officer corps, an appointment power, a nullified verdict on file.

The long afterlife

And the myth outlived all of it.

Joan's rehabilitation established a narrative — the maid sent by God who gave the true king his crown and died for it — that proved usable by every subsequent French regime regardless of its commitments. The Valois used it as a dynastic foundation story. The Bourbons kept it. The Revolution found it awkward and the Empire found it serviceable. The Third Republic found it uniquely useful because she was a Catholic saint condemned by a church court, which gave both the clerical right and the anticlerical left a handle. She was canonised in 1920. Both the Resistance and Vichy claimed her.

That is the same phenomenon the Mongol case produced at the end of its own arc: a legitimating formula outliving every institution that made it and being picked up by strangers.

A legitimating narrative is the most durable object an order produces, more durable than its taxes, its armies and its appointment powers, because it costs nothing to hold and can be reached for by anyone who finds themselves in an analogous position.

And the analogy required is looser than the original. Charles VII needed a witness who could not be bought. A twentieth-century republic needed a symbol that could bridge a confessional divide. Those are not the same requirement, and the same figure served both — which tells us that what survives is not the mechanism but the story, and that the story travels because it has been detached from the mechanism.

Reading the collapse against the framework

The first finding, on the timing of legitimacy repairs. Every element of the 1456 nullification was available in 1450 except three: the death of a protected man, the end of the war, and the security to convene a tribunal that could have refused.

A legitimacy repair is undertaken not when it is needed but when it is safe, and its date therefore records the ruler's security rather than his exposure. Charles was more exposed in 1431 and undertook nothing; he was least exposed in 1456 and undertook everything. Any case in which a ruler reopens an old verdict should be read as a statement about his current position rather than about the verdict.

The second finding, and it completes the sequence's account of what survives. Sort what Charles VII left by type.

The **institutional** things survived him: the *taille*, the ordinance companies, the artillery, the officer corps, the recovered territory.

The **personal** thing — the borrowed authorisation of 1429 — did not survive and did not need to, because it had been spent converting a claim into an office.

The **appointment power** survived him by four months and was traded away by his son for something his son valued more.

And the **narrative** survived everything, and is still in use.

A borrowed authorisation is not an asset to be held but a bridge to be crossed, and the test of whether it worked is not whether it endured but whether an institution stands on the far side of it. Charles VII's did. Akbar's did not, because the discipleship was never converted into anything but a personal bond. The Sakya's did not, because the pre-eminence was never rooted in anything Tibetans had agreed. That is the discriminator between the cases, and it is the sequence's answer to what a legitimation is actually for.

A note on sources.

The chronology in this module is standard throughout: Rouen recovered November 1449; Bouillé's inquiry March 1450; Formigny 15 April 1450; d'Estouteville 1452; Roussel's death December 1452; Castillon 17 July 1453; the appeal of November 1455; depositions from 16 December 1455 to 28 May 1456; the verdict of 7 July 1456 with the ritual destruction of a copy of the articles.

The nullification formula is quoted in Module 7 from the English rendering of the text printed in DuParc's edition; the observation that it annuls the process without certifying the revelation is a reading of that text.

The Dauphin Louis's flight to Burgundy in 1456 and his residence there until 1461, Charles VII's death at Mehun-sur-Yèvre in July 1461, and Louis XI's revocation of the Pragmatic Sanction by ordinance of 27 November 1461 with the subsequent negotiated arrangement preserving royal influence over nominations, are standard.

The successive appropriations of Joan's myth by later French regimes, and her canonisation in 1920, are treated at greater length in the earlier study of this case in this project and are standard.

The propositions that a legitimacy repair records the ruler's security rather than his exposure, and that a borrowed authorisation is a bridge whose success is measured by whether an institution stands on the far side, are this study's.

MODULE 11

WHAT THE INSTRUMENT COST THE INSTRUMENT

Module 11 · the grim accounting — two columns in which the largest single entry on the second is one person, and a record produced entirely by courts

The first column

Set down what the arrangement produced, at the fullest valuation.

A kingdom that survived. In 1428 the Lancastrian settlement had the better legal title, the greater military record, Paris, the University, the Parlement and Burgundy. By 1453 it had Calais. Whatever one thinks of the means, the outcome was the reunification of France under a native dynasty and the end of a war that had run, in phases, for a hundred and sixteen years.

The end of the free companies. The ordinance of 1439 and the establishment of 1445 created the first standing army in western Europe since antiquity and ended the *écorcheurs*, and the countryside's improvement from that is not a small item.

A state. A permanent tax, a professional artillery, an officer corps, a *parlement*, an appointment power over the church, and a monarchy that had converted itself from a party in a civil war into an institution — with consequences that ran to 1789 and beyond, not all of them good.

And a verdict, in 1456, that was procedurally sound, produced by a genuinely mixed tribunal after four years of evidence, and that has never seriously been challenged.

The second column

The war itself, from 1415 to 1453 in its final phase: Agincourt, Verneuil, the sieges, the *chevauchées*, and above all the free companies in the intervals between campaigns, which did more damage over the period than any battle.

The taille, permanent from 1439, paid by those without exemption.

The Armagnac-Burgundian civil war that produced the whole situation — Montereau, the Cabochien terror, the massacres in Paris in 1418.

And Joan.

She is the largest single entry on this side of the ledger and she has to be entered as one, without dramatising and without discounting.

A girl of seventeen presented herself; a court examined her for three weeks and found her usable; she was armed and sent; she was wounded twice; she was captured; she was not ransomed; she was sold; she was tried for four months by a court whose purpose was known to everyone, held in a secular prison guarded by soldiers rather than in an ecclesiastical one, denied counsel, and burned alive at nineteen. Twenty-five years later a tribunal found that the process had contained deceit, slander, contradiction and manifest error of law and of fact.

The instrument that made the King of France was expended by the party it served, and the party's own later court established that the expending was unlawful. That is not a moral flourish. It is the finding of the tribunal Charles VII arranged.

What the record will not support

The source position here is the best in this entire sequence and it has one specific blindness.

Two enormous judicial dossiers survive, produced by opposing parties, containing between them the sworn testimony of scores of people who knew her — soldiers, judges, notaries, villagers, servants, her own mother's petition. That is an extraordinary body of evidence and it is why this case can be examined at a level of detail nothing else in the collection permits.

And it is entirely about her. Both courts were assembled to determine the status of one woman. Neither had any reason to record what the war had done to a village in Beauce, what the companies took from a farm in Champagne, or what the *taille* meant in a household in Poitou.

The chronicles supply some of that and the fiscal records supply more, and none of it comes with names. **The best-documented person in fifteenth-century France is the one the century used up, and the millions it ran over are a category in an assessment roll.**

They do not net

And the columns are, as always in this sequence, one transaction seen from two ends.

The standing army that ended the free companies was funded by the permanent tax; the permanent tax was granted to an anointed king; the anointing was procured by a

girl the king did not ransom. There is no arrangement in which the first exists and the last does not.

The state that emerged is the thing the expenditure bought, and the expenditure included her. Charles's own tribunal said, in 1456, that the manner of the expending had been unlawful. It did not say — and could not have said — that the arrangement should not have been made.

Reading the accounting against the framework

The finding, and it is specific to this class of instrument. Every case in this sequence has produced costs borne by people outside the settlement. This one produces a cost borne by the instrument itself, and that is a distinct entry.

Where a legitimating authority is a person rather than an office, the accounting must include what happened to the person — and it will characteristically be bad, because the properties that qualified them are the properties that leave them undefended. Joan's qualifications were incapacities: no property, no office, no faction, no lineage. Every one of them is also a reason nobody was obliged to protect her. An office has an institution behind it; a family has kin; a lineage has a monastery. A witness qualified by having nothing has nothing when the witnessing is done.

The instrument's fitness for the purpose and its expendability afterwards are the same set of facts. That is the hardest thing in this study and it is not an indictment of any individual. It is a property of the arrangement, and it should be expected wherever such an arrangement occurs.

And the second finding, on a record produced by courts. The Seljuk case had a record biased toward what kept; the Investiture case one produced as a weapon; the Mughal case one produced by two men on the same payroll; the Mongol case one written in two genres that did not overlap.

This case's record was produced by tribunals, which means it is the best evidence in the collection about a single individual and among the worst about a society — because a court's jurisdiction is a person, and everything outside that person is admitted only insofar as it bears on them. The extraordinary intimacy of what we know about Joan of Arc is the exact measure of how little the same archives tell us about anyone else alive at the same time.

A note on sources.

No figures are given in this module for casualties, for the yield of the *taille*, for the damage done by the free companies, or for populations, because the surviving material supports none.

The conditions of Joan's imprisonment — held by English soldiers in a secular prison rather than in an ecclesiastical one, denied counsel, and the four months of proceedings — are among the procedural findings of the 1456 nullification and are reported as such. Her age at death is conventionally given as nineteen, resting on her own statement at trial that she was about nineteen; her birth year is not documented.

The 1456 formula characterising the earlier proceedings as containing deceit, slander, contradiction and manifest error of law and of fact is quoted in Module 7 with its source.

The Armagnac-Burgundian civil war, the Cabochien period, the Paris massacres of 1418, the free companies and the *écorcheurs*, and the fiscal and military institutions of the reign, are treated in earlier modules with their sources.

The proposition that a personal legitimating instrument's fitness and its expendability are the same set of facts, and the observation about the peculiar shape of a court-generated archive, are this study's.

MODULE 12

THE FIFTH POSITION

Module 12 · convergence and divergence — where a claim of direct revelation sits in a table built from four other cases, and the strongest case for Charles VII, stated fully and answered

The table, and the space in it

Five studies in this sequence have examined rulers facing one problem. Force compels and cannot make obedience owed. Somewhere there must be a party who can declare that obedience is owed, and the declaration is worth having only because the ruler could not have produced it.

The first four separated on where the authorising credential lived.

In an office. Latin ordination, conferred by a bishop in a hierarchy running to Rome. Capturable — which is why the Investiture Contest happened, and why in 1438 Charles VII himself took control of French episcopal appointments by statute.

In a person. The Islamic *ijāza*, master to student, compellable by nobody. Uncapturable at any price, and therefore also uncommittable: seven scholars signing at Fatehpur Sikri bound nobody in Jaunpur.

In a family. The Khön of Sakya, hereditary since 1073. Predictable, uncapturable, and hostage to biology, so that a khan ended up ordering a Tibetan hierarch's marriages.

In a state grant. Not a credential but the funding beside it: *madad-i maʿāsh*, a pension for a life, which gave Akbar the one lever Nizām al-Mulk had lacked.

This case supplies the fifth, and it is the only one available to a ruler with nothing: a claim of direct revelation.

Its properties are unlike all the others.

It **cannot be captured**, because there is no office to seize and no institution to appoint. It **cannot be defunded**, because it requires no funding. It **cannot be inherited**, because it is not a position. It **cannot be verified**, and everyone concerned knew it — which is why the church maintained a technical literature for testing spirits and why Poitiers sat for three weeks. And it **cannot be repeated**. Every other credential in this table reproduces itself: bishops make bishops, masters license students, families beget heirs, treasuries pay pensions. A revelation is a single event with a single witness,

and when the witness is gone there is nothing to draw on.

It is the cheapest authorisation in this collection, the least controllable, and the only kind a desperate ruler can obtain — for the reason Module 8 established: a ruler in extremity can only get certificates from parties he controls, and those are worth little, so the one source of value left to him is a party nobody controls, which means a party outside every institution.

Why she could not be discounted

The mechanism is worth stating one final time in the sequence's own terms, because it is the answer to the question this case was taken up to settle.

An authorisation's value is what the issuer could have gained by withholding it. On that measure:

The Abbasid caliph had no army, no revenue, and a stipend a general could stop — and was therefore worth a hundred thousand dinars and a century and a half of custody.

Gregory VII could not refuse absolution to a penitent, and Henry IV stood barefoot in the snow for three days to make him issue.

Akbar spent five years making his scholars unable to refuse, obtained their signatures, and a provincial judge overturned the document in nine months.

Phagpa's word was worth something because the Khön had been eminent for two centuries before a Mongol arrived.

And Joan had nothing at all — no property, no office, no faction, no lineage, no literacy, no prospect of rule, and a sex that the Salic rule made constitutionally incapable of benefiting from the succession she was pronouncing on. Every one of those is a reason she could not have been bought, and she made the point herself, twice, in a courtroom, correcting a copyist who had written *surrender to the Maid* where she had dictated *surrender to the King*.

The qualification is incapacity. The product is unsuspectability. And unsuspectability is the whole of what an authorisation is.

Why the common man's belief was load-bearing

Which yields the sequence's answer to the harder question — not why belief makes obedience cheap, which was established four studies ago, but why the sincere conviction of ordinary people is structurally necessary to elite legitimation.

The Armagnac faction could manufacture troops, money, offices, pardons, chronicles and letters. It could not manufacture the belief that God intervenes in the fate of France, or the cult of Michael and Catherine and Margaret, or the expectation of a maid from the marches of Lorraine, or the conviction that oil from a vial at Reims makes a king. Every one of those existed before them, was held as fully by their enemies as by themselves, and had no owner.

A faction can build an unforgeable claim only out of a belief it did not build.

That is why the belief has to be sincere and widespread rather than merely professed. A conviction that everyone privately knew to be a court invention would supply no purchase whatever, because the entire point of appealing to it is that nobody can say you made it up. The common man's belief is load-bearing not because it makes him obedient — though it does — but because **it is the only raw material in existence from which a claim can be made that its maker could not have made.**

And it is why the belief must include the possibility of counterfeit. A tradition in which every claimed revelation is accepted supplies no certification, because certification requires the possibility of failure. The theology of discernment, the three weeks at Poitiers, the *probate spiritus* — those are what make the finding worth anything, and they exist because ordinary people took the danger of false prophecy as seriously as they took the possibility of true ones.

The strongest case for Charles VII

Stated as his best advocate would state it.

You have written a study about a king who used a girl and abandoned her. Consider his position.

He was twenty-five, disinherited by a treaty his own father sealed and his own mother witnessed, with a question over his birth he could not answer, holding half a kingdom against a coalition that had beaten every army France put in the field for fourteen years. The alternative to his cause was not peace. It was the permanent absorption of France into an English dual monarchy governed from Rouen and Paris by men who had already shown at Agincourt and Verneuil what they would do.

He did not invent Joan. She came to him. He did not simply believe her — he did the responsible thing and had her examined for three weeks by the most learned men available, who told him there was no evil in her and that in the kingdom's necessity he might proceed and look for a sign. He looked for the sign; it came at Orléans; and he acted on it.

He then did what a king is supposed to do. He made peace with Burgundy at the cost of a public humiliation. He recovered Paris. He built the first standing army in Europe and

destroyed the free companies that had been eating the countryside for two generations. He ended the war. And when he was finally able, he had the woman who had served him cleared by a tribunal of foreigners and former enemies that he did not control, on the petition of her own mother, and the verdict has stood for five hundred years.

He did not ransom her. Neither did anyone else, and there is no evidence the English would have accepted any offer; they had bought her precisely to destroy her. Measure him against the other rulers in this sequence and against what would have happened without him.

The answer

Most of that is true, and the last point about the ransom deserves more weight than it usually gets: the English purpose was destruction and it is not obvious that money would have moved them.

But no offer was made, and that is a fact about a court, not about the English. He held prisoners. He said nothing publicly for nineteen years. His own archbishop, who had presided at her examination, wrote unfavourably about her after her capture. The most that can be said is that the abandonment was rational, and this study has said it: the coronation could not be un-performed, so the marginal value of the instrument was nil, and an instrument acquired for nothing has nobody with an interest in protecting it. That is an explanation and not a defence, and the explanation is worse than the accusation because it generalises.

The examination was real and it was also insufficient, and the commission's own drafting shows they knew. They did not certify her revelations; they certified permissibility in necessity and deferred the proof to Orléans. A tribunal convened by the king, of the king's clergy, under the king's chancellor, in the only theological centre he had, could not have done more and everybody could see it — which is why the Rouen court in 1431 asked for the register and, not receiving it, simply proceeded.

The state-building is the strongest item and it is the right answer to what the whole thing was for. The *taille*, the companies, the artillery, the appointment power — those are institutions, and they stood. The sequence's discriminator applies and Charles passes it: a borrowed authorisation is a bridge, and the test is whether an institution stands on the far side. Akbar's did not; the Sakya's did not; Charles VII's did.

And the 1456 tribunal is genuinely to his credit, precisely in the way this study has argued: he understood by then that a verdict is worth what the tribunal's capacity to refuse makes it worth, and he built one that could refuse, and took his own name off the petition. That is a man who had learned the specification.

Now the concession, and it is the last thing this sequence will say.

Charles VII got, at the moment of his greatest weakness, the only kind of authorisation available to a man in that condition: one issued by a person with nothing, who could not be suspected because there was nothing to suspect her of wanting. It was the cheapest instrument in this collection and the most effective, and both of those facts have the same cause.

And the same cause made her disposable. An office defends its holder; a family defends its member; a funded institution defends its own. A witness whose entire qualification is that she has no institution behind her has, by construction, no institution behind her. The properties that made her testimony unbuyable are the properties that made her unransomed.

That is not a paradox and it is not an accusation of any particular man. **It is the shape of the instrument**, and it should be expected wherever a ruler in extremity reaches for a person instead of an office — which is to say, wherever a ruler is desperate enough to need the best authorisation there is.

A note on sources.

The comparisons in this module rest on the four preceding studies in this sequence — the Seljuks and the Abbasid Caliphate, the Investiture Contest, the Ibadat Khana and the Mahzar, and the Patron and the Priest — and on the earlier study of this case in this project; where facts about those cases are stated without citation they are documented there.

Joan's correction of the letter, the Poitiers conclusions, the composition of the 1455–56 tribunal, the absence of any recorded French ransom attempt, and Regnault de Chartres's unfavourable letter, are all treated in earlier modules with their sources.

The counter-position in this module is composed, not quoted. It is an attempt to state the case for Charles VII as his best advocate would state it, drawing on claims that appear across the historiography rather than on any single author, and it is answered point by point rather than dismissed.

A structural parallel between a caliphal investiture, a papal absolution, a *maḥẓar*, a *mchod yon* relationship and a claim of private revelation should not be pressed into an identity: they are five different instruments in five settings, they decay differently, and they are vulnerable to different attacks — which is what the table above is for.

On the question of what Joan of Arc actually experienced, this study takes no position. It has examined the position of the man who used the claim and the properties that made the claim usable. Whether the voices were what she said they were is not a question this framework can answer, and the framework's inability to answer it is not evidence about the answer.

◆

Part of the collection Patterns of Power. Tested, never revealed.